RELIGION and the MODERN WORLD

JOHN HERMAN RANDALL &
JOHN HERMAN RANDALL, Jr.

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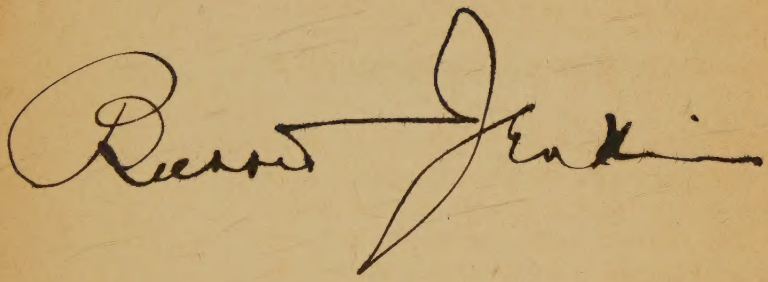

"RELIGION AND THE
MODERN AGE" Series

RELIGION AND THE MODERN WORLD

"RELIGION AND THE MODERN AGE" Series

Edited by JOHN HERMAN RANDALL

A series of brief, clearly written books dealing constructively with the problems of present-day religious life in the light of modern knowledge and modern social conditions.

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RELIGION and the MODERN WORLD

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

JUL 22 1968

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FOREWORD

During the 19th century many notable religious leaders attempted to reconstruct traditional religion in the face of the criticism of natural and social scientists and of the social needs of that age. Progressive religion today owes a great debt of gratitude to those pioneers: it is still largely following in their footsteps. But the present generation has seen an intellectual and a social revolution that makes all previous attempts to adapt the religious and moral inspiration of the past to the needs of the modern world seem outgrown and inadequate. The interpretation of the world generalized from 19th century natural science, against which sensitive and high-minded men felt compelled to protest as inadequate to human experience, has been completely altered and enriched by the scientists themselves. The crude theories of earlier social scientists as to the nature and function of religion are now seen as the groping attempts of a science in its infancy. 19th century philosophies, chiefly protests in the name of human experience against an inadequate and incomplete science, have given way to philosophies that grow out of a broader scientific knowledge and a more flexible intellectual method. Most significant of all,

a matured industrial society has awakened this generation to moral and social problems that seem incapable of solution without going far beyond any of the elements, however purified, of the religious tradition.

In the light of these changed view-points and problems, thoughtful men today no longer approach the religious life in the spirit of their fathers. They no longer seek to cling to as much of tradition as they can save from an encroaching science. They no longer try to secure an intellectually respectable faith by paring away what has been destroyed. They no longer resort to imposing philosophies that will bolster up the essence of traditional religious beliefs in the face of science, nor do they seek in scientific concepts, like evolution, a substitute just as good. Nor is it enough for them to fall back on the core of moral idealism in Judaism and Christianity as a sufficient gospel for our age. The religious conflicts of the last century leave them cold, because it seems to them as futile to attack or defend religion in general as to approach the other great enterprises of art or science in such a controversial spirit.

To those familiar with the intellectual and practical attitudes of today, the religious life is a natural part of human experience, to be studied, assimilated, lived, and developed like any other great human institution. It has manifested itself in various forms in different societies, and has normally played a vital

part in close connection with the intellectual beliefs, the emotional and artistic expression, and the moral conduct and ideals of those societies. What interests the man of today is the needs of human nature religion has met, and how it has satisfied them most richly and effectively. What he wants to know is not how much traditional doctrine he can still believe. It is something far more than that: it is what organization of the religious life, intellectual, emotional, and social, will best meet the religious demands of men living in our present age. How can he express his religious feelings of piety toward the sources of his being and aspiration toward a fuller life in such a way that he will not find them in conflict with the rest of contemporary experience, but rather a source of further consecration and inspiration? He does not want a religious faith he will have to defend against his other interests; he wants a faith that, springing naturally from them, will carry him beyond them.

There are many men who have been working at these problems; but the great mass of literature dealing with religious adjustment and reinterpretation still concerns itself with the conflicts of the past generation rather than with the present. There has been as yet no systematic attempt to deal, in a way the ordinary man can understand, with the problems of contemporary religious life in the light of the most recent science and philosophy and with a full

realization of the implications of present-day social tendencies. In the series "Religion and the Modern Age" it is hoped to enlist men abreast of the thinking and civilization of our own day. They will treat the religious issues of today and tomorrow, not those of yesterday. They will address themselves to the many who are seeking a more adequate faith than traditional orthodoxy, or than the liberal compromises of the last century. Progressive religion can not stand still; it must either advance to deal concretely and intelligently with its problems, or else disappear before orthodox traditionalism and religious indifference. It needs all the criticism, guidance, and inspiration it can find. Each in his own way, the men who write in this series will try to give it such help.

JOHN HERMAN RANDALL
General Editor,
"Religion and the Modern Age" Series

New York City
February 22, 1929

Part I

THE EFFECTS OF SCIENCE AND THE MACHINE AGE ON WESTERN RELIGIOUS LIFE

Chapter I

HOW RELIGIONS GROW

In the face of the many symptoms of profound religious change in present-day society, even the wisest of observers finds it hard to escape confusion of thought and bewilderment. What at bottom is really happening to our religious life? Where shall we turn for the very facts on which to base a judgment? Shall we accept at their face value the obvious signs of the prosperity of organized religious bodies, the statistics of increased church membership, the tearing down of ugly buildings and the raising of more satisfying houses of worship, the immense sums of money and the human energy expended in all forms of social work? Shall we listen to the noisy quarrels over matters of belief, and with the incorrigible theological interest of the Protestant tradition concentrate on the strife between embattled orthodoxy and the devious reinterpretations of liberal theologians? Shall we view our religion as a great conflict between the complacent and opulent supporters of a priestly formalism, and the moral prophets who are struggling to make righteousness and social justice and the Kingdom of God prevail? Or shall we mark the rising

tide of religious indifference, ranging from the grudging support of the average church-member to the open hostility of the city intellectual or the class-conscious workingman? Where is the key to a proper interpretation of these conflicting cross-currents?

It requires little penetration to recognize that American religious life has changed profoundly during the last generation, and that it has changed because American life in general has been fundamentally transformed. We are beginning to accept the fact that a new form of civilization has been emerging in America, a civilization moulded by the factory and the machine, guided by business men, and dependent on the techniques of the laboratory and the engineer. We are coming to see it as but part of a new world-civilization that, first developing in Europe in the midst of a complex traditional culture, is now spreading to all the countries of the globe. Partly, perhaps, because of the simpler social background in the United States, partly because of the unique opportunity to make the most of material resources, this new civilization has begun to reveal its distinctive traits a little more clearly in America than elsewhere. To most Europeans, as well as to many of our own thoughtful observers, this new form of social life has often seemed peculiarly American. For them "Americanism," whatever it may have meant in the past, is today identified with the scientific, democratic industrialism that is covering the world.

What we do not fully realize as yet, is that all the

chaotic and contradictory currents of our religious life, all its conflicts and antagonisms, are at bottom incidental to this development of a new civilization in a world where older traditions had crystallized. The persistence of the historic forms is strongest in those places, geographic and social, where American civilization has been least altered by the impact of the machine age, with its attendant education in new ideas and new moral habits. The faith of our fathers is still cherished in the countryside, in the small town, in the agricultural South and West, in suburban communities, in the middle class of the cities. So recent, indeed, has been the development of city civilization, that most of us still have roots going back into the once universal simpler society. In the city we can behold all the faiths of the Western world struggling to find some place for themselves amid the hurried strident pursuit of pleasure and gain. Every form of traditional religion has been drawn into the new American scene, and every form has held within itself the conflict of older loyalties and newer interests, old ways of living and new types of social experience.

It is clear, also, that intellectual concerns have played but a minor part in the changes that are taking place. The evangelical orthodoxy that calls on all the resources of wealth and business organization to sell the gospel of Christ crucified, in competition with the other attractions of city life, is surely a far cry from the religion of the simple village church. It has taken on new form just as cer-

tainly as have the more conscious attempts to reconcile traditional beliefs with modern ideas.

It may be that out of this impinging of new life on old faiths will come another religious reformation, a rebirth of religious forces let loose by the cracking of outgrown forms. It may be that the conservatives are right, that unless the faith of the fathers can be preserved unchanged, we shall be face to face with a complete disintegration of all the accustomed channels through which religion has flowed in the past. But there is at least no question that our whole society is changing so rapidly and so completely that it is futile to expect any of its institutions, no matter how deeply cherished, to stand aloof from the process. The forces that have in a century transformed a pioneer farming community into the industrialized American we know, could not fail to be profoundly disturbing for so intimate a part of our life as religion. Some men and some organizations are trying to face the problems of readjustment consciously and critically; the rest are being swept along despite themselves.

If, like so many Americans, we have ourselves come from a small village into a large city, we have in our own experience lived through a social revolution. We have been familiar with the great farming America of the 19th century, and with the evangelical Protestantism that was its natural religious expression. We have dwelt in a relatively simple community whose social life was organized largely in terms of the moral and religious attitudes

of a fairly homogeneous faith. Then in the city we have been plunged into a very different world. It is a world where the inherited forms of religious life have been pushed into the background by dozens of other interests unknown in the simpler days of the village. The very types of religious experience on which pre-industrial religions founded themselves have been obscured by the wave of prosperity and the new worldly morality of comfort and enjoyment.

The thoughtful observer who for the moment refrains from passing judgment or taking sides, has spread before him a vast laboratory. Before his eyes there is being worked out a gigantic social experiment. All the religious currents that have flowed into our country are feeling the impact of the forces of present-day American life. In one way or another they are trying to adapt themselves to the new machine age, with its background of natural science and its vision of material prosperity.

The Protestantism of pioneer farmers, with its consecration of the labor and austerity and personal responsibility of the frontier, has found itself amidst the wealth and perplexing social problems of the city. Orthodox evangelical churches have tried to keep alive the traditional Protestant gospel of salvation, but purity of doctrine has not prevented the spirit of prosperous business enterprise from making itself at home. Most of the urban Protestant churches have felt the call to be intellectually as well as socially respectable. In beliefs,

in attitudes, in programs, Protestantism has in spite of itself been accommodated to the demands of city life. It has rediscovered the beauty of a great tradition; it has heard the insistent call to social service. It has found it good to turn aside for an hour from the merry-go-round of modern life to find a sanctuary of peace in communion with the past, in the beauties of ritual and the æsthetic appeal of a common aspiration. It has taken still more to its heart the religion of Martha. It has built great institutional churches, ministering to the sick, caring for the needy, teaching anything and everything. It has endowed imposing settlement houses; it has waged fierce social crusades, against darkness in foreign lands, against strong drink, against war. For some, religion has come to be primarily a release, an escape for the moment from the insistent drives of the work-a-day world. For others, it has been rather serving their fellows, at least concerning themselves actively, efficiently, and determinedly with their affairs. Church services have eagerly grasped all the refinements that centuries of loving care have builded into a rich and beautiful habitation for the Christian spirit. At the same time, never has there been more organized social activity carried on in the name of the church.

Thus has Protestantism tried to assimilate itself to the impulses of the new America, the America of personal ambition and ruthless competition, of groping for beauty and education, of efficiency and organized coöperation, of self-critical misgivings,

of passionate enjoyment of newly-won goods, of the mechanical service of life. Despite all the weight of its immemorial tradition and its deep roots in the rural past, Catholicism too is being forced into the same mould. It has shared the Americanization of the newcomers on whose loyalty it so largely rests. And Jews, coming at last out of the world into which for centuries they have been locked, unfettered by the traditions of their new home, are all the freer to merge themselves into the life of the modern Chosen People. They are finding it hard to be both distinctive and American. All religions alike have put on the garb of present-day interests and concerns; all alike have been Americanized, industrialized.

Yet during the very years in which more and more money, more and more devoted professional energy, have been directed by the churches to humanitarian ends, organized religion has been losing the dominating influence it once held in American life. The more it has tried to adapt itself to the vital interests of present-day city-dwellers, the more it has emphasized beauty, or social service, or jazzed entertainment, the less distinctive has been its appeal in competition with the many other institutions that have grown up to meet the same needs. It has found itself the rival of the concert-hall and the radio, of specialized philanthropic organizations, of frankly political and economic groups, of the movies and the dance-hall. From being itself the organized expression of social life, religion has become simply one

competitor amongst a host of others. Church members support these enterprises lavishly, and care less and less about the church. From being the goal that drew all else to itself, religion has become a force that can be directed to the many new ends that really awaken men's interest. Where it was once something to be lived, an insistent problem to be wrestled with by every mortal soul, it is now something to be supported for the incidental works it accomplishes, something to be employed in the furtherance of other purposes. It is little wonder that many men are ceasing to find any distinctive appeal in organized religion, and in their preoccupation with the real concerns of modern life are simply forgetting its existence.

It is apparent that the religious life of the new industrial civilization will be profoundly different from that of the past. What some of its chief concerns and experiences will be is already fairly clear. What remains to be determined is how far it will preserve continuity with the past, how far, that is, the newer religious currents will find an adequate channel in the traditional forms of organized religion. Those with a professional or a sentimental interest in the existing churches are naturally anxious to preserve them as the social groupings through which religion will function. But to the detached observer the emotional loyalties, the deep concerns, the fundamental aspirations,—all that goes to make up the vital currents of the religious life of a society,—have far outgrown the churches that have come

down from the past. Whether those churches will be able to recapture them, or whether they will continue as the innocuous organization of traditional piety, while new religious organizations spring up around the living faith, is a question whose answer is as yet undetermined.

To the great majority, both inside and outside the churches, even to raise such an issue causes bewilderment. Could anything properly called religion exist outside the traditional structure of the Christian and Hebrew faiths? Would not such an outcome mean inevitably the disintegration of all religious life in Western civilization? Does not, indeed, the adaptation and reconstruction that has already been effected within the churches, involving, as it does, the abandonment of much that was central and the assimilation of more that had no place of old, itself foreshadow the death of both Christianity and Judaism? The reinterpretation of creeds and articles of belief has already gone so far in liberal theological circles that even the central core of theism has been touched. With so many feeling that Christianity is gone if the virgin birth or the vicarious atonement is questioned, how could it conceivably exist if the very notion of God were given a merely symbolic significance? What is there in common between the modern worship of beauty and imagination as an escape from life, and the wholehearted flowering of human life in religious symbols and art that once expressed the most passionate aspirations of men? What is there in the organization

of charity, the passion for meddling with one's fellows, the regulation of life in the interests of hygiene, the worship of healthy bodies and trained minds—what, indeed, is there in the scramble for prosperity and enjoyment, whether of self or fellows, whether by Big Business or by trade union or by social revolution, that recalls the righteousness of the prophets, the renunciation of the saints, the meekness and non-resistance of the Master, the austerity of the Puritan? Is this Christianity? Is this religion at all, flourish it never so vigorously in the shadow of the church?

And yet—where has there been a religion that was living and vital that failed to spring from the deepest impulses of the society whose life it expressed? Where has there been a religion that could long hold aloof from the beliefs, the intellectual formulations, that the educated amongst its adherents employed? Where has there been a religion that flourished apart from the standards accepted by a society as its living faith, that failed to find room for the deepest moral insights its leaders achieved? Certainly neither Judaism nor Christianity has ever been such an isolated, crippled faith. Are we beholding the disintegration of religion in modern society? Or do we witness the first stages in its reconstruction to fit it to become the adequate expression of the new world into which we have moved? Do we see the twilight of all faith, or do we see the old garments discarded by men whose religious life will henceforth be clothed in new forms?

There is one escape from the dilemma of orthodoxy or disintegration. It is to recognize that the kind of religious revolution in which we are participating is by no means new. The history of religions, in fact, is the record of one great readjustment after another. Whenever a society has faced novel conditions, whenever its experience has been fundamentally altered, by migration, by contact with other cultures and ideas, by internal growth and development, its religious life has undergone just such transformations. The history of our own religious traditions in particular, of Judaism and Christianity, has been unusually rich in examples of adaptation to changed situations. Hardly a generation has gone by, save when Western society was fairly stable in the Dark Ages, that did not feel its faith disintegrating under the impact of new ideas and new conditions. There has never been a time when the conservatives did not view with alarm the abandonment of essential verities and the assimilation of alien ways of life and thought. There has never been a time when earnest leaders were not seeking to incorporate new ideas and new values into a tradition they felt to be out of touch with modern needs. And down to the present every one of these crises has been met and successfully faced. The adaptation was made, the reconstruction carried through. There have been false steps, paths that had to be retraced; but ultimately each age has managed to mould the materials of its past into a form that expressed its own needs and aspirations.

What reason is there to suppose that our own generation will be unable to continue this immemorial process of reconstruction? Is it not a little overmodest to assume that we alone are incompetent to find a fitting form for our religious life? Is it not somewhat arrogant to believe that we for the first time are in possession of so much knowledge that we can no longer find room for any faith? On three separate occasions Christianity was confronted by imposing bodies of belief, great systems of carefully worked out and articulated ideas. Each time able thinkers arose to fit the Christian faith into those bodies of science. The simple gospel of the early Christians met the great Platonic philosophy of the Hellenistic age. The outcome was not disintegration; it was the formulation of Christian theology by the Alexandrian Fathers of the Church, Clement and Origen and Athanasius, and the marvelously rich system of Augustine. The crude and primitive religious life of the early Middle Ages was confronted by the scientific thought of Aristotle. The result was not the abandonment of faith; it was the intellectual synthesis of the Scholastics, now hailed as orthodoxy by the Catholic Church. Profoundly shaken by the humanism of the Renaissance and the mysticism of the Reformation, Christianity was brought face to face with the negative rationalism of 17th century physics. The culmination of a long struggle was, intellectually, the religious philosophies of the idealistic movement, and practically, the mass revivals of the early 19th century. Need we

imagine that the fourth great set of scientific ideas, the biological and social science of the last two generations, will destroy men's faith at last because it throws such a flood of light upon it?

Or do we think that modern industrialism presents a social experience the like of which has never been faced before, an experience which will inevitably destroy the very bases of the religious life? Is the gulf between the modern city and all that went before really greater than those that were faced in the past? What was there in common between the vigorous national struggles of the Hebrews, and the passionate yearning for private salvation from the evils of the Roman world? What had the religion of the early Christians, that despaired of life in this world and sought the mortification of the flesh as the prelude to future bliss, to offer to the exuberant and worldly barbarians who so eagerly took it over? What identity of needs persisted from the theocratic saintliness of the Middle Ages into the hard worldly ambition of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? What community of aspiration bound Calvinism, with its abnegation of the human soul before the might of God, and its cultivation of personal holiness, to the democratic sympathies and glorification of individual worth that marked the religion of the Age of Reason?

We are so caught up in the continuities of names and words that we do not recognize the wide diversity of content that has characterized the Christian tradition. Its theologies have ranged from the

crudest polytheism to the sheerest agnosticism, from the most primitive magic to the most sophisticated naturalism. The moral codes it has sanctioned have varied from age to age, from the most passionate asceticism to the richest humanism, from the most barbaric warrior bloodthirstiness to the most generous humanitarian sentiments, from the selfish pursuit of private salvation to the broad social vision of the Middle Ages. Surely labels and symbols that have been stretched so far can be stretched a little further, if men desire, to include the religious and moral life appropriate to a scientific and industrial civilization.

The history of Christianity, in fact, has been the history of generation after generation of great modernists, of assimilators who incorporated new ideas and new moral ideals in the face of the forces of tradition and fundamentalism. All the great theologians and philosophers of Christianity, all her great statesmen, all her moral prophets and leaders, were men who faced the problem of readaptation to changed intellectual, social, and moral experience. The very building of Christianity in the Roman world was the assimilation by an obscure sect of one element after another of the varied spiritual experience of the Hellenistic age. This is still somewhat obscured for us by our Protestant superstition that the process was a conquest by the world, a corruption of an original purity. To the modern historian, it is quite certain that if the teachings of Jesus had remained pure, they would never have been heard

of; they would certainly never have been taken over by our own barbarian ancestors! They were rather accidentally incorporated in the final synthesis of the ancient world, where they have remained to be rediscovered from time to time in periods of social upheaval, never with such disturbing effect as today. This Christian synthesis was marvelously inclusive; everything in the Roman world seems to have found a place, from Greek rationalism and humanism to the ideas and ideals of Egyptian and Babylonian priests, already old before the Greeks discovered Greece. It was also highly unstable; for it was held together, not by any consistent system of thought, but by the universal range of the experience it embodied. Since no one man could possibly share all that experience, the history of Christianity has been the drawing upon its various elements, the emphasis upon certain things to the exclusion of others; this has been especially true since the abandonment of catholicity and unity by the Protestants.

It was this religious experience that Western Europeans inherited in the Middle Ages. Since that time, the story has been again of continual change, reinterpretation, absorption. Just because the Europeans took over the experience of another civilization, instead of elaborating that of their own society, there has always remained something alien about Christianity, a kind of unnatural otherworldliness. It is this element that has made Christianity so effective a religion of escape into another world, when men have demanded release from their own times. But

it has also provoked redoubled efforts at reconstruction. On the one hand, the Middle Ages elaborated the saintly ideal; on the other, they succeeded in ordering an entire society, as our society has not been ordered since. For Christianity was alive, able to grow, to assimilate the vital impulses of the society that cherished it. When Aristotelian science was discovered in Islam, it was easily incorporated. When commercial prosperity turned men's minds to the humanistic ideals of classic literature, that too was made Christian in the Renaissance.

It was not, in fact, until the anticlerical movement of the Reformation that disintegration made its appearance as the concomitant of further growth. Since then Christendom has been bifurcated. The Catholic Church has remained fixed intellectually where it stood at the Council of Trent; but its power of growth is still great in social and moral matters. Though the last century has seen it issue a vigorous intellectual defiance of modern thought, it has also seen it coming to terms with industrial civilization in a way that promises further assimilation in the future. For their part, the Protestants entered upon a period of picking and choosing from the tradition, combined with recurrent waves of reinterpretation. If they have faced unusual difficulties in adapting themselves to the demands of industrialism, it is largely because Protestantism was so successful in absorbing and expressing the individualistic commercial spirit of the early modern period. As things stand today, it seems that Catholicism can fit itself

into the social experience of urban and industrial society with less of a wrench than can Protestant orthodoxy. But the Protestants have already gone through three major periods of intellectual reinterpretation, in the Age of Reason, in the Romantic era, and during the 19th century. They seem to be in a somewhat better position to adapt themselves to the ideas of our modern world.

The historian sees in our present perplexities only another of these recurrent problems of religious reconstruction. The average man, however, has not the knowledge to lift himself above the tensions of our day to a region whence he can view them in proper perspective. He knows little of the past of his own religious tradition, to say nothing of the infinite variety of forms in which the religious experience of other peoples has expressed itself. There is probably no field in which even the educated are quite so provincial in their thinking, as religion. To judge from common observation, or from the weird and erratic ventures of eminent specialists into the arena of religious debate, when an otherwise well-informed American thinks of religion, he thinks of Christianity; when he thinks of Christianity, he thinks of Protestantism; when he thinks of Protestantism, he thinks of American denominational life in the last quarter of the 19th century; and when he thinks of that, he is thinking of what he learned in Sunday-school, or heard from the minister in the pulpit of the family church, or observed in the narrow if intense faith of his parents. He may be for it or

against it; the chances are he doesn't really care much one way or the other. But he will never lose an opportunity to pronounce sweeping judgment about the function and value of religion in general and Christianity in particular, blissfully unconscious of his abysmal ignorance. Most educated men would hesitate before dogmatizing about the significance of art in human life on the basis of occasional attendance at the movies. But a similar limited experience does not deter eminent statesmen or millionaire inventors or world-famous physicists or successful editors from *ex cathedra* pronouncements on religion.

Such provincialism today is apt to fall into one of two attitudes. When it does not wish to be disturbed in its serious pursuits, it insists that everybody has been mistaken. There is no conflict between religion and anything else. Do not ministers still preach, and does not money roll in? When it is too deeply concerned with religious forces to emulate the ostrich, it insists that we are facing the turning-point of religious history. Civilization is being undermined by attacks on our fathers' creed; or man is at last free from the weary burden of superstition and priestcraft and vain imaginings; or we are the first generation to discover the true and universal religion of Jesus.

A wider experience brings release from both these unenlightened attitudes. The knowledge even of our own religious past shows that readaptation to changed conditions has been both normal and con-

tinuous. It is in the light of this past that the thoughtful man will face the problems of reconstructing our religious life once more, to meet the demands of scientific industrialism. It is thus that living religions grow. It is thus that our own religious heritage took form. It is thus that it has been remade century after century. There have been new experiences and new beliefs, crises and conflicts and antagonisms. But there has also been a continuity, a continuity that runs back to the days of the Disciples, and far beyond to the dim past of the civilizations of the ancient East. Certain values, certain insights have been won. They have persisted for future ages to draw upon when faced by the insistent problems of living. It may be true that modern science represents a sharper break with traditional beliefs than any our fathers ever encountered. It may well be that the religious life of a society that employs mass production to create a superfluity of material goods, will stand in striking contrast to the emotional needs and aspirations of the societies of the past that have struggled along at a starvation level, compelled to eat of the bitter bread of renunciation. It may be that the religion of the future will stand to our Jewish and Christian past as Protestantism stood to the medieval church. It may be that it will bear the relation borne by Christianity to the Eastern religions whence it sprang. It may be that the gulf will be still greater. But we shall not dispense with all that the prophets and saints of old held dear; we shall return to them again and again.

So great is the power of custom that even though existing churches fail us utterly, we shall in all probability continue to call the religious expression of our lives by the name of that Prophet of Nazareth who has so long symbolized our higher aspirations.

Chapter II

THE RELIGIOUS HERITAGE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The sober historian refuses to be stampeded either by the hectic alarm of religious traditionalists or by the noisy opposition of radicals. He realizes that the religious life of today is undergoing one more of those reconstructions, in the light of new interests and new beliefs, with which he is so familiar in the past. He smiles at the bewilderment of those who are for the first time learning that religions are not immutable deposits, but rather growing, living expressions of the life of man. He is amused, too, to find others gleefully or sadly celebrating the funeral of all religious impulse because, forsooth, astrophysics has forgotten Genesis and Freud thinks saints a little cracked. He is too much interested to discover what new forces are now at work, and whither they are tending, to imagine that the heavens are crumbling, or that man is at last set free. To him it is one more chapter in a familiar story.

Such an historian, however, does find good reasons to explain why men feel so keenly that a crisis exists in contemporary religious life. In sober truth, for over a century the tension between the Western reli-

gious tradition and our new social experience has been unusually acute. Industrialism has been literally transforming our society, leaving untouched hardly a habit of our lives. It has conferred an immense prestige upon the natural science that is so closely bound up with its technological basis. The ultimate revolutionary effect of science and the machine on traditional modes of belief and ways of living we are just beginning to realize.

Scientific beliefs and scientific philosophies were the first part of the new civilization to become articulate. Long before they had transformed our social environment through the machine, they had offered themselves for man's rational acceptance. And religion was in many ways the most characteristic institution of the old society, certainly the core of its intellectual life. It was thus that during the 19th century the issue between the two civilizations was primarily intellectual, and presented itself as the struggle between natural science and familiar religious belief. We can now see that this conflict in the realm of belief, the warfare of science and theology, was but the opening battle in a much wider struggle destined to be waged between all the traditional institutions of Western civilization and the new scientific industrialism.

The fact that religious ideas bore the brunt of the first attack of the new forces, is not to be understood in terms of any anti-religious character of science alone. It is due just as much to the particular religious situation that prevailed at the beginning of the

last century. Natural science had, in fact, been present in European thought since the 17th century,—that age of pioneer genius in which the great scientific ideas had been discovered. Newtonian science had become in the Age of Reason a powerful influence with the educated class, and had been intimately bound up with the social struggles and political revolutions that completed the breaking-down of the medieval world. There had been problems of adjustment involved in accepting the new science, but they had not been especially acute. Above all, religion had nowhere opposed itself strongly to scientific ideas. The real struggle of the new science had been, not with religious beliefs, which had readily lent themselves to transformation, but with the social structure of European society. It was not till the 19th century, not till the great effort at scientific popularization that began in the sixties, that the conflict of religious and scientific beliefs became central.

The key to the late emergence of this conflict lies not so much in any new hostility of 19th century science to religion, as in the great religious movement that immediately preceded it. Science made its way easily into the minds of men in the 18th century because they were not especially concerned with religion, and had little attachment to the beliefs traditionally associated with it. Science proved to be a disruptive influence in the 19th century because there had just occurred a profound religious revival, which had made religious attitudes and beliefs central in the life of Western culture.

Without realizing the strength and importance of this religious life at the beginning of the last century, it is impossible to understand why it was religion that so acutely felt the shock of the new forces of the age, and why it was that the intellectual side of religion, the beliefs of the Christian tradition, felt it first. Any analysis of the religious changes of the last century, and of the religious problems of today, must start from the peculiar character of the religious heritage of the 19th century.

Western society confronted the disruptive forces of science and the machine with a religious life strangely divided. On the side of moral and social ideals and attitudes, of the whole way of living which it approved and consecrated, Christianity had already come to terms with the forces of the modern age. It had accepted the individualism, the commercial ideals, the devotion to vigorous labor in the world, the scorn of idleness and mere pleasure-seeking, the esteem of personal responsibility, honesty, and business integrity, that marked the commercial age. It had already rejected otherworldly asceticism, flight from the serious business of life, and the ideal of spiritual aristocracy that revered the monk and the hermit. It had abandoned the medieval attempt to regulate the entire social life of man in terms of a religious ideal, and had made of its moral precepts the cultivation of individual and private rectitude. It held the individual to a high level of self-control, especially in sexual matters, but it made no effort to control society or to offer any guidance for

the conduct of group relations. This welcoming and consecration of the deepest urges of the social experience of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries was already a thing of the past. The readjustment had involved struggles, but in the Reformation period, and in the triumphant Puritan ideals that swept both Protestant and Catholic Europe in the 17th century, the moral reconstruction had been effected. The very fact that Christianity had so successfully taken to itself the ideals of a society given over to commercial individualism, was destined to produce its own crop of bitter problems when the factory made insistent the demands of an industrial collectivism. But till late in the 19th century this issue was not deeply felt; it belongs almost to the last generation. In 1800 Western society felt little conflict between its social needs and the moral ideals of its religious tradition.

On the side of beliefs, however, Christianity in the early 19th century had not come to terms with the intellectual currents of Western society. It found itself, in fact, involved in a profound intellectual reaction against just such an attempt at modernism. The immediate occasion, indeed, of the great religious revivals had been intense dissatisfaction with the 18th century experiment in harmonizing religious beliefs and natural science. In consequence, not only was it true that Christianity entered the 19th century committed to the full set of ideas about the world and man's relation to it that came down from the pre-scientific period; in addition it was com-

mitted to them with all the bitter intransigeance of reactionaries. Not only had science not been successfully assimilated; it had been tried and found completely wanting, so far as the needs of the religious life were concerned. And the shadow of that failure, the greatest failure of the Age of Reason, lies across the entire religious history of the 19th century. It sent the mass of men back to a set of beliefs that was bound to come into sharp conflict with the expanding world of science, and made them suspicious of any attempt at mediation or conciliation. It drove those who welcomed the new science into open hostility, not only with traditional theological conceptions, but often with the substance of the religious life itself. And for those unwilling to reject either religious experience or the scientific quest, it compelled, in philosophic idealism, the fitting of scientific ideas into an ultimately traditional framework of supernaturalism; it prevented the frank acceptance of the enlarged techniques of scientific experimentalism, and the welcoming of the naturalistic philosophies based on this broader foundation.

Thus it was that Christianity entered the 19th century with its values belonging to the early modern period, to the age of commerce and individualism, and its beliefs thoroughly medieval and pre-scientific. A religion less adapted to scientific industrialism it would be hard to imagine. Slowly but surely throughout the century men came to feel that those medieval beliefs were untenable; but so committed were they to a religious explanation of the world that instead

of employing science to enlarge and illuminate their beliefs, they felt that it was undermining their faith. And, ironically enough, they found that the organic and functional social ideals of the medieval church, discarded as obsolete in the early modern period of revolt against all social control, were being insistently demanded by an industrial society. It is little wonder that such a religious tradition has been found irrelevant to modern life, and that its reconstruction has proved so perplexing.

The disruptive effects of 19th century science and industrialism, therefore, upon the religious life of Western civilization, must be seen against the background of the intense experience of the Protestant and Catholic revivals. Those revivals, in their turn, can only be understood as reactions against the Enlightenment attempt to modernize and rationalize the Christian tradition.

That experiment in liberal religion was almost foredoomed to failure. For it did not spring, like the great religious syntheses of the past, from the incorporation of new ideas and interests into a living religious faith. It took place at a time when men were already turning from religious interests to other concerns, weary of the conflicts and struggles of the post-Reformation period. The religious impulse of Puritanism was ebbing when the ideals of the Enlightenment took form. The life of business enterprise had been consecrated by Protestantism; points of doctrine and details of church government led only to unending wars. Men were only too glad

to strip the religious tradition of everything on which rational minds could not agree. The primary religious problem was thus not to quicken the spiritual life, or to find the Kingdom of God. It was to end religious controversy and avoid social disturbance. To find an irreducible minimum in terms of which men could live at peace with their neighbors, thinkers turned to the tenets of the new science and the ideals of business.

The aim of the rational or natural religion of the Enlightenment was thus primarily negative. It was to purify Christianity of all that was irrational and not obviously useful to society. Science and commerce therefore did not enrich the religious life; they led to its disintegration. They caused men to abandon element after element, until little of distinctive value was left. From a living experience, a passionate longing, an immediate vision, Christianity became a supernatural sanction for a prudent ethical code. It no longer offered men salvation from the inevitable shortcomings of human life; it sought rather to bolster up the social ideals of sober business men.

The Age of Reason saw but two elements of value in the religious tradition. There was the belief in God and a future life of rewards and punishment; there was an individualistic moral code, a vague humanitarianism demanding that the rights of all men be respected. What else in Christianity was of any earthly use? These beliefs and this ideal were all that fitted into 18th century science and society. Any

distinctive religious experience was dismissed as irrational "enthusiasm"; any sense of religion as a cohesive force binding men together into a spiritual unity was impossible in that age of individualistic revolt against all such social ties.

The Hebrew-Christian moral tradition was thus reduced to its bare rational core. What was left was preached by the humanitarian prophets of the age, —the Voltaires and Rousseaus and Jeffersons and Tom Paines—as the generous and vague social idealism of the Enlightenment. Human benevolence, sympathy, altruism, service,—these were the essence of a rationalized Christian ethics. So well was the rich moral content of Christianity reduced and adapted to the experience of middle-class business men that this code has served us down to the present. It is still preached in liberal pulpits, inculcated in Y. M. C. A.'s, given lip service by all speakers of platitudes, and accepted by the popular mind as the heart of religion and morality. It expressed the social idealism of an essentially individualistic society. And most of us even today have not yet realized its hopeless inadequacy for an industrial age.

But this humanitarianism was accepted by all in the Age of Reason. Though it was the core of religion, it was not distinctively religious. What remained peculiarly religious, for the modernists intent on reconstructing Christianity, was rather the other element they preserved from the tradition: the rational propositions making up natural theology. Thus in effect religion was reduced to a sup-

posed ultimate scientific explanation of the world.

So accustomed have we become to think of religion in intellectual terms, as a set of propositions or beliefs, that we can hardly realize what a profound revolution this meant. To take the religious life, passionate, emotional, the expression of deep experiences and intense yearnings, and make of it no more than a few metaphysical propositions like belief in God and immortality, was wholly unprecedented. Religious experience has always demanded some intellectual formulation, some adjustment to men's beliefs: but never before had belief been made not merely the central but the only element. No society or group to which religion has been a living reality could conceive of such an aberration. In truth, the natural theology to which the Enlightenment reduced its traditional religion was not the living faith it passionately served. That living faith was the revolutionary social idealism so close to its heart; that was its real religious expression. The tenets of what it called natural religion were but the bare bones of a dead survival.

The Reformation, it is true, had already begun to emphasize belief. When Christendom broke into warring sects, intellectual differences came to the fore; and in both Catholicism and Protestantism there was a natural tendency to emphasize the disagreements about which men fought, rather than the fundamental religious life which they still lived largely in common. The Protestants had exaggerated this intellectuality by finding their religious authority

in a Book rather than a social institution, and by basing corporate loyalty on the acceptance of a creed rather than a sacramental system. But the great reason for this novel turning of religion into nothing but a set of beliefs, was the emergence of natural science in the 17th century. Science was the great disturbing factor, the new element to be assimilated; and in the absence of any distinctive religious impulse, the assimilation became an identification.

Moreover, the science of Descartes and Newton, unlike the Platonic and Aristotelian sciences that Christianity had been able to absorb when it had been a living faith, had no place in it for man and his experiences. Those other systems had started from the central position of man in his world; they had been human and ethical. Their ultimate conceptions had been the Logos, the rationality of the world; or the Prime Mover, the end to which the whole creation moves. To identify the Christian God with such concepts did not destroy the religious life; it tended rather to illuminate it by explaining the ends of conduct and the objects of human aspiration. But to identify him with the ultimate concepts of mechanics, with brute force, with creative power, was to rob him of all religious value. Religion not only ceased to be a life, and became a scientific explanation; it no longer explained man's struggles and aspirations, but turned out to be only a highly speculative branch of mechanics.

Though the great physicists from Newton down

hastened to identify God with space, or ether, or force, or some other hypothesis of mechanics, it soon became evident that all religious values had evaporated from such a modernizing theology. Such a God was neither moral nor divine. Nor did he last long even as a scientific hypothesis. Physics soon came to dispense entirely with the hypothesis of a creator, and natural theology was demolished by a number of keen critics, led by Hume.

The Enlightenment attempt to harmonize religion and science by identifying religion with a few passing scientific theories failed completely. The religion disappeared, and the theories were superseded. That experiment in liberal religion ended in utter disintegration. Whatever religion might be, its values were certainly not those of scientific explanation. The many men who in the 19th century failed to profit by this experience, and made the same attempt again, have only served to drive home this important lesson. Their present-day successors, who still strive to find God in some postulate of physics or biology, like ether or evolution, would do well to study the history of 18th century modernism.

It is against this background of intellectual failure that we can understand the character of the great religious revivals of the end of the 18th century. Those revivals themselves were part of a more general movement that swept Western society, a deep reaction against the dominance of the narrow scientific and commercial ideals of the Enlightenment. The middle class had apparently advanced too

rapidly in trying to assimilate the new forces of science and commerce. The pull of tradition was too great. The 18th century compromise was too meager, it left out too much that was vital to human experience, so soon as the initial enthusiasm for the new forces had expended itself. There was a rebirth of all those energies of man that had been subordinated to a narrow rationalism and commercialism. This Romantic movement began with religious prophets and artists; it soon merged in a general reaction against the social ideals of the French Revolution, and expressed itself in an extraordinary outburst of all the non-rational forces in human nature, from sheer social conservatism to poetic imagination.

One aspect of this complex movement was a revivifying of the religious life. In turning from the narrow dogmatisms and systems of 18th century thought to the riches of a broader human experience, men felt the old call of religion once more. The vast majority, impatient with the failure to harmonize religion and science, simply appealed to the Christian tradition. Catholicism gained enormous strength, not only as a bulwark of social reaction, but also as a satisfying organization of human experience. In the Oxford movement it captured many of the finest spirits of the Church of England. In Germany, England, and America, Protestantism had a rebirth. The form it took in the Wesleyan and Evangelical movements was not merely a revival of the earlier Puritanism; that now seemed too coldly intellectual,

too bound up with the logic of the 16th century theologians, to be ultimately satisfying. It was the mystical redemptive religion of Paul, of Luther, not the rational system of Calvin, that men wanted. The intense experience of sin and moral struggle, the emotional warmth of conversion at the hands of the living Christ, the assurance of sanctification—these were made fundamental. Such an immediately personal salvation offered escape from drab toil for the workers in the new industrial towns of England and the lonely frontier farms of America; and evangelicalism gained strength by leaps and bounds. The whole religious and moral life of England and America during the last century received its characteristic coloring and stamp from the gospel of Wesley; and where it has persisted unchanged, Protestant orthodoxy or fundamentalism is still living in that experience.

Such a religion does not shirk the sterner realities of the personal moral life. It is rooted in a profound sense of human weakness that is missing in the facile optimism of religious liberals. But a religion less fitted to meet and assimilate the new scientific and industrial world it would be hard to imagine. It rejected science utterly, and turned to dogmatic and authoritarian faith. It discarded even the thought and philosophy of Augustine and the Reformers. It was intensely personal, with no point of contact with industrial and social needs. Its moral code was narrow and rigid, quite inadaptable to times of prosperity. It tried, in other words, to reject com-

pletely the world that was everywhere pressing in upon it.

For intelligent and thoughtful men such a religious life was impossible. Impatient as they were with the Age of Reason for its failure to adjust the religious tradition to science and commerce, they could not blandly reject the new forces. For them, the trouble lay rather in the nature of the attempted reconciliation. The task must be tried again, with a more adequate appreciation of the varied resources of human experience. Hence the very movement that for the great majority meant a rejection of the modern world, meant, for a certain number of outstanding leaders, especially in Germany, a second and far richer venture at assimilation, at modernism. It is not only contemporary orthodoxy that goes back to the Romantic movement for its inspiration. The liberalism or modernism of the last hundred years as well owes its strength and its intellectual formulations to that reaction against rationalism, and to the religious leaders and philosophers who then tried to reconstruct Christianity.

This second great attempt to bring into the religious tradition the forces and values of the modern world differed profoundly from that tried during the Age of Reason. It was made by men to whom the religious life with its experiences and values was something intensely real. It was undertaken in an age when Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant, was for the masses of men once more a living faith. It was not, therefore, a denudation, a dropping of

alien and incomprehensible elements. It was a genuine new synthesis, a real enriching of the religious life. It was a synthesis, moreover, that founded itself not on a set of beliefs, but on the length and breadth and fullness of human experience. For the Romantic thinkers, the starting point and the ultimate verification of any interpretation of the world must be, not a set of ideas, but the totality of the living experiences of men. Moral striving, religious aspiration, mystic faith, and artistic imagination, were as fundamental realities as scientific rationality. Art, religion, the moral life, and science were all great human enterprises to be pursued and enjoyed; and any narrow system that refused to accord them recognition was doomed. To grapple successfully with the problems of social and cultural reconstruction, to effect an enduring assimilation of the forces of the modern world with the values of the past, a new synthesis must include them all. It must not insist on certain values, those of scientific explanation or commercial utility, to the exclusion of others just as real and fundamental. It must welcome all experiences and values, and seek ever to increase the wealth of human life.

When men approached religion with this basic conviction, it was inevitable that they should undertake a thoroughgoing reinterpretation of its very nature and function. In religion, too, experience and life must be made central. Religion must be a great human enterprise, an organization of men's feelings and actions as well as their beliefs. It could not be a

mere club to enforce a narrow moral code; it must be a complete life, as little rational or narrowly useful as life itself.

In this attitude, the Romantic modernists were far closer to the facts of religious history than had been the Enlightenment liberals. Their contention has been accepted and made basic in every serious scientific attempt to understand the nature and function of religion as a phenomenon to be studied. But unfortunately, when they came to formulate the philosophical significance of the religious life, when they undertook to fit it into an intellectual interpretation of the world, they could not forget that they were primarily rebels against science and a scientific world-view. So anxious were they to escape from the cramping limitations of the narrow dogmatism of Newtonian science, that they could not help feeling that religious experience afforded a surer clue to the nature of the world and man's place in it than did the thought of the scientist.

Had it not been for this fear of science, the Romantic modernists might have interpreted their experience on a humanistic and naturalistic basis. They might have included their profound appreciation of the reality of the religious life in a philosophy that would have welcomed the open-minded inquiry of scientific method. As it was, they found it inevitable to fall back on the philosophic attitude in which the religious experience had for two thousand years been imbedded, and to incorporate science itself in a religious world-view. They stood, therefore,

just as firmly as did the frank traditionalists, for a religious philosophy, an interpretation of the world that made man, man's interests, and the values man cares for of cosmic significance. They believed, as did the Wesleyans and the Catholics, that there is something not improperly symbolized by God and providence, a Friend behind phenomena who cares for man, that man's ideals are safe because the power behind nature is also devoted to them. Science for them dealt with a world of mere appearance; its laws were both abstractions from and distortions of experience. Reality was beyond the reach of scientific inquiry; it could be found only in the religious life.

For the modernists, therefore, as well as for the orthodox, human life and human values were intimately bound up with supernaturalism. The cruder myths of the religious tradition they were content to interpret symbolically; but the net result of the subtle philosophies to which they resorted to escape from science was to rehabilitate a religious, supernaturalistic, and non-scientific world-view. Ultimately, therefore, the modernists found themselves as bitterly opposed as the traditionalists, though on a much more fundamental level, to the scientific spirit and attitude that gained increasing prestige with every decade of the 19th century. They were committed to a faith in the cosmic significance of man, to a substantial God, to immortality, and to a cosmic moral order; and such faith the scientific spirit was steadily undermining. They were committed to a transcendental or supernaturalistic philosophy that

was being steadily abandoned in favor of philosophies starting out from science. They still insisted on escaping into a realm inaccessible to scientific inquiry, despite the fact that enlarged scientific methods and concepts were rapidly making escape unnecessary and impossible. And to this day liberal religion, for all its eagerness to come to terms with science, has remained faithful to the spirit of the anti-scientific Romantic revolt against Newtonian dogmatism.

Nevertheless, although an adequate assimilation of the new forces to the values of the older tradition remained to be effected, the Romantic philosophers did enter on a reinterpretation of the nature and function of religion that carried them far toward a reconciliation with the naturalism of present-day science. Though they failed to realize it themselves, they had adopted an attitude that ultimately transformed the problem of defending a religious philosophy of the world, into that of developing a philosophy of religion that would need no defense against knowledge and intelligence. There has been a direct growth from the great religious philosophies of the liberal Romanticists to our present-day naturalistic and humanistic philosophies of religion. They did show the way to our own insistence on the reality of the religious life and its values without belief in its myths.

Three main interpretations were put forward, destined to serve as the three main lines of religious reconstruction. That of Hegel insisted that religion

is essentially a form of rational experience, of knowledge; it is a philosophical interpretation and explanation of the universe, using symbols where pure philosophy uses concepts. In both content and aim religion and an adequate philosophy are identical. That of Schleiermacher maintained that religion is not a form of knowledge, but a form of art; it is an organization of the feelings and emotions, not an explanation. It is an æsthetic experience with the universe as its object. Its rational element, theology, offers a set of symbols, not for the explanatory concepts of science, but for the deepest feelings of the religious experience. The function of theological beliefs is to describe man's religious experience; Bibles and creeds offer such symbolic descriptions of past societies. Hence no theology can have universal or objective validity; it must be reinterpreted in terms of a growing religious experience. The third view of the function of religion, that represented by Ritschl and many others, held that it is neither a form of rational or emotional experience, but of action and conduct. The religious life is a life of moral striving, to realize human social ideals; it is "morality touched by emotion," in Arnold's phrase. It is making the will of God prevail, building the kingdom of Heaven on earth; and God is the will that is made to prevail, Heaven is the Kingdom that is built.

To regard religion as intellectual explanation, with Hegel and the philosophical idealists, was to continue the 18th century notion of its function, substituting a more adequate philosophy for a narrow

science. In identifying religion with philosophy, it committed philosophy to a religious world-view and alienated it from science, to the mutual harm of both. In equating it with philosophical idealism, it exposed it to complete disintegration when science forced men to abandon such idealism. Moreover, such an attempt proved ultimately as negative as the identification with the simpler propositions of natural theology; for a disinterested working out of the logic of idealism, in the hands of a pure thinker like F. H. Bradley, leaves one with concepts equally irrelevant to any human religious concern.

To regard religion as rather a matter of æsthetic or moral experience, of Beauty or the Good Life, though the view was first worked out by the idealists, is quite compatible with a naturalistic and humanistic attitude. Hence while Hegel's intellectualistic interpretation was strongest among modernists and liberals as long as philosophical idealism was dominant, with the growing naturalism of modern thought the æsthetic and moral interpretations have come to the fore as the leading contemporary tendencies in the philosophy of religion.

The 19th century, therefore, confronted the beliefs and philosophies of natural science and the changed social experience of industrial society with an intensified and passionate religious life. Organized churches were dominated by masses of men who had put resolutely behind them any trafficking with science, and were firm in the traditional faith. At the same time, they were committed to moral

ideals that had been carefully adjusted to an individualistic society. To such men the triumphant advance of science and industrialism could come only as a disintegrating force, shattering their beliefs and invalidating their ideals. On the other hand, a small number of thinkers had worked out reinterpretations of Christianity that enabled them to come to some sort of terms with the forces of the new age. Even these modernists, however, were confronted by scientific doctrines and philosophies, and by collectivistic social experience, that they were unable to assimilate. To men for whom the religious life was a living reality, the new civilization was bound to be profoundly disturbing.

Chapter III

THE RELIGIOUS TRADITION AND SCIENCE

If we compare objectively the Christianity and Judaism of today with those same religions as they flourished a century ago, we find them altered in a thousand ways. If we seek the causes of these changes, we find them rooted in the transformation that has come over man's social environment. The experience of men confronted by the limitations and the opportunities of a city life founded on industrialism, differs profoundly from the experience of an agricultural and handicraft society. The place filled by religion and the forms it shall take must also be different. Changes in belief have played a part in this religious revolution, but we recognize today that they are of less importance than the subtler, more indirect, but more pervasive changes effected by a new social environment. And it now seems probable that industrialism, the factory, the machine, and city life, have just begun to show what they are going to do to religion, as to all our other inherited institutions.

In the 19th century, however, it was not the still infant industrialism, but science, that proved most

disturbing to the religious life. It was the intellectual conflict between the beliefs bound up with the traditional way of life, and the beliefs on which the new society was based, that first became acute. Actual ways of living can be subtly transformed over a long stretch of time without becoming the subject of passionate debate. The habits of men have to be profoundly altered before there is occasion for a serious questioning of professed standards and social ideals. Not until this generation, in fact, have men really faced the possibility of a thoroughgoing revision of their traditional moral and social conceptions. But it is different with conscious beliefs. New ideas make themselves felt quite early in the process of change, and demand some definite stand.

This concentration on beliefs, normal in the first stages of any fundamental change in the social experience of a people, was reinforced by the divided nature of the religious life with which Christendom confronted 19th century developments. Its moral standards were already adapted to the competitive individualism of the early industrial revolution; its beliefs had just been reformulated in conscious opposition to natural science. It is little wonder, therefore, that while no doubts were felt as to the validity of the Christian moral code, the tenets of Christian theology seemed to conflict on many vital points with the science and philosophy of the new age. This very emphasis on attacking, defending, and reconstructing religious beliefs led to a distorted view of the nature and function of religion. Faith was made cen-

tral, and identified with belief in certain doctrines. The emotional, moral, and social elements of the religious life were pushed into the background. Radicals rashly imagined that the hold of Christianity would be gone if its ideas were shown to be not quite up-to-date; defenders of orthodoxy were confident that its validity would be secure if only they could work out a logical proof of its beliefs. And all the while, the new industrial life was steadily and surely altering traditional religion in ways far more fundamental than any of the points raised by the noisy debate over the conflict of "science" and "theology."

Unquestionably, the major intellectual force of the 19th century was the constant growth of "science" and its increasing prestige. With equal certainty, this "science" did come into conflict with the form Christianity had assumed during the Romantic religious revivals. But the nature of this conflict was far from simple. It is certainly näive to imagine it in terms of the rejection of Genesis and the acceptance of an alternative theory of creation. It seems highly probable that even the intellectual changes to which Christianity and Judaism were subjected during the century owed little to rational argument, and much to the subtle insinuation of new habits of thought and new basic assumptions. What really happened was that side by side with the religious faith dominant at the beginning of the century, there grew up in the minds of an increasing number of men another faith, the faith in science. This faith in science was in

definite conflict on certain points with the older religious faith; but it proved such a disturbing influence, not so much because of these definite conflicts, as because of its complete irrelevance to traditional religious faith. The struggle between "religion" and "science" has really been the competition of these two faiths for men's allegiance. It has been carried on at a level far deeper than any rational argument *pro* or *con* can reach, for it involves the ultimate assumptions of argument, the basic habits of thinking.

Both these faiths have been themselves complex. The religious faith with which men confronted 19th century science was held on at least two levels. The great majority of Catholics, Protestants, and Jews believed implicitly in an elaborate account of the creation of the earth and of man, as recorded in Genesis. They believed in the absolute authority of a sacred writing, or an infallible institution. Christians believed in certain miraculous events that had taken place in Palestine. They believed that God had been born of the Virgin Mary, had been crucified, had died and risen on the third day, to atone for man's sins and bring him eternal salvation in heaven. Obviously, there were many particular beliefs in this traditional cosmology and history that could be directly contradicted by scientific beliefs. In this matter of the Scriptural record, it could be a genuine alternative between accepting a traditional or a scientific statement.

For the profounder religious thinkers of the Romantic movement, however, literal belief in all these

events was a matter of comparative indifference. For them, as for the outstanding religious philosophers in the Catholic and Jewish tradition, the Scriptural record was not so much sober history as a set of symbols expressing spiritual and religious truths. They were concerned, not with the details of the creation story in Genesis, but with the fact that creation, however it be conceived, is a divine process. They were indifferent to the actual events on Mount Sinai; what was important was the existence of a moral law of cosmic significance. They could well afford to welcome whatever new light scientific investigation might shed on the details of cosmology and history. For them, religious faith consisted in a certain interpretation of what science described. At bottom, it meant that the processes of the world were divinely ordered, that God was the fundamental reality, that man was made in his image, that human interests and ideals were of cosmic significance, that human aspiration and striving were not alone in the universe, but were supported and sustained by a Friend who cared, that human personality was in some sense to be conserved eternally. Such a religious faith insisted on nothing that could be either proved or disproved by scientific methods; when it came into conflict with science, it could not be with any article of scientific knowledge, but only with the more basic assumptions of the scientific faith. Such men could welcome every scientific discovery; they drew back only before philosophies that started from scientific data and generalized from them.

For its part, the faith in science also meant several different things. It meant, first, the acceptance of a body of scientific knowledge, that is, beliefs tested and established by the approved methods of scientific verification. Examples of such beliefs are: the knowledge that all present biological species, including man, are descended from earlier and simpler forms of life; or the knowledge that the moral conscience is not a simple organ of apprehending moral truth, but is the complex organization of the individual's experience with his fellows. Secondly, the faith in science meant the acceptance of the basic assumptions on which scientific verification proceeds, assumptions like the uniformity of nature, the universal reign of causal relationships, the canons of inductive logic, the validity of the experimental method. To share such assumptions meant to exclude miracles, the unique inspiration of any document, all argument from authority.

Thirdly, the faith in science meant the acceptance of the "scientific world-view"; that is, of some philosophic picture of the world which started from the scientific knowledge already achieved, and, excluding other data, generalized from it in accordance with the basic assumptions of the scientific method. Examples of such scientific philosophies from the 19th century are the Positivism of Auguste Comte, the synthetic philosophy of Herbert Spencer, and the Monism of Ernst Haeckel. Today such world-views might be represented by Bertrand Russell, or by the earlier philosophy of Santayana.

Fourthly, the faith in science meant the sharing of the scientific habit of mind, the scientific temper of thought, and of a philosophy in which the spirit of scientific inquiry, as distinguished from any particular scientific theories or dogmas, is made central. As representative of the full implications of this spirit, the American today might mention John Dewey or Morris Cohen.

The processes by which the faith in science grew, and the ways in which it tended to supersede the older religious faith, are exceedingly complex. Logical argument, refutation and disproof, played a minor part. It was rather a matter of new loyalties and interests, and the waning of older concerns, of the steady piling up of new habits of thought which made the older beliefs and the older temper of mind seem irrelevant. A John Roach Straton cannot be convinced that the Bible is not literally inspired; but a scholar who has spent years in the critical study of manuscripts cannot believe it is. A scientist who has come to feel the hypothetical, tentative, provisional nature of the truth he has found cannot believe that anywhere is there authoritative and absolute finality. A philosopher who has absorbed the spirit of scientific investigation, who understands the history and the nature of the whole scientific enterprise, and of all the gropings of the human mind after truth, can understand the older religious faith; but he understands it too well to share it literally.

Religious faith on its first level, belief, that is, in traditional cosmology and mythology, seems logi-

cally incompatible with any type of faith in science. Nevertheless, multitudes of men have been able to entertain at the same time the poetic stories of the Pentateuch and the latest theories of exact investigation. Many an orthodox Protestant and Catholic has been content to separate his scientific and religious beliefs by a watertight bulkhead; and many such a divided mind has, like Pasteur's, contributed to the discovery of new truth. Catholics in particular have ample authority in Thomas Aquinas and other medieval philosophers for separating the spheres of faith and reason.

Most Protestants and Jews, however, who have attempted to combine religious and scientific faith, have been thrown back on the second and deeper level of religious faith. So long as the essentials of a religious interpretation of the world could be maintained, they have been willing to accept the scientific description of its processes. Once such men are resolved to forego belief in traditional mythology, it is not difficult to resolve any logical conflict between a religious world-view and scientific knowledge. Most of the philosophies of the 19th century made just such an attempt, and so long as the desire persisted to combine the two faiths, they were measurably successful. Such religious liberals and modernists have been able not only to accept scientific knowledge; the great liberal theologians could incorporate as well the second level of scientific faith, faith, that is, in the basic assumptions of scientific method.

The deeper conflict has occurred between those who, while accepting the discoveries and assumptions of science, insist on a religious interpretation of the world, and those whose faith in science has led them on to a "scientific world-view" and to philosophies built on the spirit of scientific inquiry. Some of the more speculative generalizations of 19th century physics, like the conservation of energy and the second law of thermodynamics, were opposed to any religious interpretation of the world as a whole. The issue here was not so much a conflict of theology and science as a conflict between two opposing philosophies. The philosophy that elaborated the "scientific world-view" gained its strength from the ever-increasing prestige of science; and many thoughtful men, turning of necessity from religious orthodoxy, confused this materialistic and mechanistic philosophy with the science on which it was based. Today, those 19th century philosophies of science have disappeared. The speculative generalizations of 19th century physics have crumbled, and neither physics nor biology offers now any justification for the mechanistic materialism that seemed to religious men such an alien world.

The disappearance of the older "scientific world-view," however, does not mean that its rival religious world-view is thereby validated. For if contemporary philosophy has passed beyond the dogmas of an antiquated physics, it is chiefly because it has taken more seriously the scientific temper of mind and the spirit of scientific inquiry. If it is no longer

hostile to the religious life, it is still more irrelevant to an interpretation of the world in religious terms. A physics that has abandoned matter for energy may be better able to explain human experience, but it is no nearer God. And the very fact that the methods and concepts of present-day science are able to account for most of the phenomena of human life that remained unintelligible a generation ago, make scientists all the less willing to fall back on an alternative or additional religious pathway to truth. The philosophy that builds on science today is not in such obvious need of supplementation by a religious view of the world as was that of Spencer's day, because it can serve as a fairly complete and independent interpretation of human experience.

As things now stand, there is nothing in natural science that prevents those who ardently desire it to maintain both a religious faith and a faith in science. There are plenty of men who, having grown up in a society where religious currents are still strong, feel the appeal of both faiths and entertain them both. But at the same time the scientific faith has grown so strong, so self-sufficient, so deeply rooted in the processes of our society, that more and more of those who really feel it have lost the desire to combine it with any other. For them, the scientific faith has won out, not because it is logically incompatible with older beliefs, but because it is psychologically incompatible. Their minds have become so habituated to thinking in its terms that it satisfies all their intellectual needs, and makes other attitudes seem su-

perfluous and irrelevant. The philosophies that express the basic interests of men today are no longer concerned, as they were in the 19th century, with vindicating a belief in God and immortality. Those ideas have simply dropped out of any serious grappling with the problem of understanding the world.

These philosophies that have grown up about a mature scientific faith find support, moreover, not so much in physics as in the newer data of psychology and anthropology. In applying scientific methods to the understanding of human behavior and belief, men have arrived at conceptions which have little place for the older religious ideas. They no longer dismiss the religious life as an illusion; they explain it. But anthropologists and psychologists have studied so carefully its nature, its history, and its function, they have come to appreciate so clearly its importance as a basic human experience and enterprise, that they find it difficult to accept its beliefs as having any relevance to scientific truth. They understand too well how those beliefs came into being, and how remote they are from any thought of scientific verification. Their knowledge of religion has made it seem futile to seek literal truth in traditional conceptions of God or the soul.

Many physicists and biologists, like Pupin, Millikan, Oliver Lodge, J. Arthur Thomson, and Henry Fairfield Osborn, have recently blossomed forth as liberal theologians. They are still emotionally attached to the older religious faith. They are aware that modern physics and biology have abandoned

doctrines that once were hostile to religious claims. They therefore proclaim that there is no further conflict between religion and science. In so doing, however, they show themselves abysmally ignorant of all that anthropology and psychology have done to study religion and the religious man scientifically. They show their ignorance of the philosophy that has built upon such data. They do not realize that the present-day conflict between religious faith and science is no longer with a scientific explanation of the world, but with a scientific explanation of religion. They do not know that most serious philosophic thinking today insists both on the fundamental importance of religion, and on the mythical character of religious beliefs. Any religious apologetic at present worthy of consideration by the informed man must start, not from the data of physics, but from the data of the sciences of man; and it must proceed, not in terms of 19th century philosophies trying to escape from the scientific spirit, but from 20th century philosophies trying to understand and use it.

The fact that the increasing hold of the scientific faith has tended to obscure belief, not only in the letter of the Christian tradition, but in the core of the older religious world-view as well, which the liberals tried vigorously to keep alive, must not be misunderstood. It does not mean that men have been led by science to feel less deeply the religious aspect of experience, or that they have come to place less emphasis on the reality and importance of the religious life. For some few men the new faith in science

has been, to be sure, so absorbing that it has excluded all other interests. For them, the pursuit of truth has been sufficient unto itself, has been a genuine religious consecration. But every religion can show great thinkers for whom the vision of Truth has been central and supreme; in itself such a religion of science offers nothing new. The vast majority of those attracted to science, even when they have abandoned all supernaturalism, all belief in a cosmic companion or in human immortality, have not grown thereby any the less religious. Indeed, one of the outstanding facts of recent years has been the increasing interest taken by scientific thought in religion. When religion was still identified with Christian orthodoxy, there was some excuse for hostility to it in the name of science. Now that careful investigation of the religious experience and history of man has made impossible any such provincialism, men are free to distinguish between the basic facts and reality of religion and all particular religious beliefs. Such beliefs, even so fundamental a one as belief in God, must stand their chances with the philosophic interpretation men give their experience. But the inescapable reality of religion itself, both as an individual experience and a social institution, has stood out all the more clearly. Nothing in the scientific faith has diminished its appeal; indeed, it has challenged wide interest as a most important field for scientific inquiry. The growth of the scientific faith has not made men irreligious; it has led them rather to new conceptions of the nature and function of reli-

gion in human life. If there has been an actual waning of interest in the religious life in the last few generations, that has come, not from science, not from the scientific faith, but from the competition of other interests in industrial society.

The really revolutionary effect of the scientific faith, so far as religion is concerned, has been not its new view of the world, but its new view of religion. Reinterpretations of religious belief have been unimportant compared with reinterpretations of religion itself. For those who have come to share the scientific world-view, even more for those who have absorbed the spirit of scientific inquiry, it has been impossible to view religion as a divine revelation entrusted to man. It has even been impossible to see it as a relation between man and a cosmic deity. Religion has rather appeared a human enterprise, an organization of human life, an experience, a social bond, and an aspiration.

Earliest of all, in changing men's attitude, was the scientific study of religious history. Such study has been directed to the course of Judaism and Christianity as social phenomena, to the ways of living and the forms of belief embodied in religious institutions, to the sacred documents on which religious authority has been founded. It began in 18th century Germany, where men first developed the methods of exact historical inquiry in their endeavor to escape from the non-historical attitude of the Enlightenment. Such scholars were imbued with the scientific rationalism of their age; they believed firmly that all natu-

ral events are part of a great causal order, and that that order has remained unchanged. The key to the past is to be found in interpreting its happenings as we would interpret similar events today. All that we know of the workings of natural processes and of human nature today is to be used to explain what has taken place. No cause is to be admitted that cannot be verified experimentally in the present. Following these principles, a remarkable body of scholars set to work to investigate the record of the past to find out *wie es eigentlich gewesen.* Men like A. F. Wolf applied them to the study of classical philology, laying the foundations for the epoch-making work of the Grimms and Bopp. Political historians like Niebuhr and Ranke used them upon chronicles and documents. Inevitably they were turned also to the sacred documents of religious history. Though suggestions had been made by men like Spinoza and Pierre Bayle, it was Reimarus who started the critical study of the Bible. Building upon him, Lessing advanced the view that the history of religion has been a progressive revelation of truth, an advance from primitive superstition to the insights of the Prophets and the Gospels. Under Baur there gathered at Tübingen a whole school of Biblical critics who sought to employ upon the religious record the same methods and assumptions used by secular historians.

Such Biblical critics and church historians wasted no time in refuting the defenders of the unique inspiration of Bible and church. They assumed the

scientific faith that here were human documents, written by men and written as men would write them; that here was a human institution gradually being remoulded to serve the needs of men. They denied all supernaturalism to begin with; they treated religious matters as they would treat any other. Upon this basis scholars have worked for over a century; and though it is still possible to deny logically their premises, the structure built upon them is so imposing, so insidiously plausible, so much of a texture with other human records and history, that it is a hardened orthodoxy indeed that can survey their labors and not be converted.

This new naturalistic and historical critique of the origins of Christianity was popularized by D. F. Strauss in his *Life of Jesus,* issued in 1835 and translated into English by George Eliot; and by Renan in a long series of studies beginning with his *Vie de Jésus* in 1863. An increasing army of scholars applied themselves to the study of the sacred texts to determine their authorship, the circumstances of their writing, and the many parts out of which they were pieced together. It proved impossible to maintain the orthodox Protestant view that every word and point was literally inspired and true. Fundamental discrepancies were revealed, differences in style, in motive, in interest, widely divergent accounts of the same event, conflicting commandments from God, the greatest variation in moral ideas and religious conceptions. On the traditional theory that God had dictated these writings to his scribes, these

contradictions were incomprehensible mysteries. Men were forced to the position that they were dealing rather with the religious literature of the Hebrew people, embodying early mythological attempts to understand the world, sacred poetry, religious and civil laws from many epochs, and the successive moral insights of ethical leaders. The Old Testament became for them a record of the religious and moral experience of a nation traveling from cruel barbarism to the formulation of noble ideals. The New Testament contained impressions left by a great religious teacher upon men feeling all the religious currents of the Hellenistic age. Both were a composite of documents subjected to the repeated editorial revision of men with varying interests and religious ideals. The more men studied the Hebrew Scriptures, the more they found out about the motives and life of the men who had written them; but the less sure they became about the historical accuracy of any of the events recorded from tradition. The further they studied the Gospels, the more impossible it became to disentangle from the interests of those who had compiled them any clear record of the life and teachings of Jesus. The Christian Bible turned out to be in every way analogous to the early imaginative literature and sacred writings of other peoples and religions.

Not only did it seem impossible to find in the Bible any sure religious authority; a similar study of the Christian Church revealed a purely human institution, rising to heights of noble achievement and sink-

ing to the level of the lowest human passions. The great creeds, studied in their historical genesis, stood out as compromises of divergent interests in terms of human philosophies. The great saints and prophets became flesh and blood, offering a mixture of moral inspiration and fanatical prejudice derived from their times. The very ideals of Christian morality were seen as the expression of definite groups of men living in circumscribed conditions.

The net result of this historical study was to destroy forever the shallow Enlightenment idea that Christianity was an illusion foisted on ignorant men by scheming priests. It stood out rather as a tremendous organization of human energies, revealing both the greatness and the weakness of human nature. In it, amidst much that was barbarous and cruel and pathetically ignorant, was embodied the best that Christendom had achieved in belief, emotion, and action. It was the record of the living religious life of men, a great storehouse of inspiration; and the scholars felt themselves liberated from the chaff, the less worthy elements of tradition, to take that which was of the highest spiritual and ethical value and make it their own. But the Christian achievement was none the less a human achievement; it was the embodiment of human wisdom and experience, and it was completely intelligible without reference to any impulse other than that of man himself.

Side by side with the historical study of the religious tradition, begun by the Romantic scholars and persistently carried on to the present day, went the

steady growth of physical science. The scientific study of religious history, though it destroyed many of the literal beliefs of the more orthodox, was in no wise incompatible with a general religious interpretation of the world as a whole. Liberals who welcomed it could still see in the record the long search of man after God, the slow but steady apprehension of man's spiritual nature and his true relation to divinity. But the view of the world that emerged from 19th century physics struck at the roots of any religious world-view. It embraced certain fundamental scientific conceptions and dogmas which seemed to conflict as much with the religious philosophy of the liberals as with the traditional faith of the orthodox. It scanned the heavens, and found no trace of any cosmic companion for man, any Friend who cared for human strivings. It saw only the working of immutable law, a vast cosmic machine grinding on inexorably, in complete indifference to human desires. It found in Evolution a great cosmic process; but that evolution it read not as a divine providence making for ends to which man could devote himself, but as a blind, purposeless development, a tale told by an idiot, turning out, through the workings of chance and a bloody, cruel struggle for existence, a nature red in tooth and claw, with equal indifference the disease germ and the genius, the fungus and the forest giant, the obscene brute and the martyr for truth. It peered into the future, and saw the ultimate extinction of humanity, of all life, in the running down of cosmic energy.

The second law of thermodynamics foretold the day, far-off but inevitable, when all the hopes and aspirations of men, all the noon-day brilliance of the artistic imagination, all the thought of the sage and wise man, all the thirst after God and righteousness, would perish in the slow congealing of cosmic cold. It looked into the human frame, and found a complex organization of protoplasm, a carefully built-up set of habits and impulses, capable of marvelous achievement; but nowhere did it find a soul that could persist after bodily dissolution, nowhere any element that could bear on into eternity the values that for a brief day had resided in this carbon and water. Man himself it saw as another cog in the cosmic machine, the blind slave of circumstance, the product of causes that had no prevision of their offspring, and relaxed for no single moment their relentless control over his destiny. What a man should make of himself, what choices would be his, what of sorrow and joy were to fall to his lot, were written in the book of doom before the world had left its fiery womb. Man's every act was determined by an alien, inhuman, callously indifferent nature. No longer was he the favored of God, brought forth to work out his salvation under the pitying eye of a divine forgiveness. No longer was he even the tragic hero doomed by implacable Omnipotence to dread destruction. He was but a tiny insect on the cosmic stage, a sentient being wandered by pure accident into the cogs of an utterly indifferent machine. He

and his fortunes were utterly irrelevant to the circling planets and the fiery suns.

This dark picture of an Alien World fascinated our fathers; they loved to dwell on its details even as they shuddered in horror before it. It struck terror into their hearts because they had so lately left the warm affection of the Christian tradition, the hopeful optimism of the Romantic faiths. Many men believed it because it seemed so dreadful; they prided themselves on their courage in facing facts. Many more fled from it as from a nightmare, using it as a springboard to launch themselves into a faith in God and immortality *quand même*. It surely needed but little of the will to believe to maintain that so gloomy a picture could not be the whole story. It was so obviously a work of sheer faith, an imaginative rendering of man's worst fears, a philosophy arrived at by disregarding all but a very narrow part of human experience.

That nightmare of an alien world has vanished. The speculative generalizations of 19th century physics have disappeared before further data and more adequate concepts. Nature appears today in more friendly garb. Her processes have brought man to birth, the world she offers him is a world in which his many enterprises can find a natural home. Man's natural environment, having made him what he is, having given him the materials for his living, itself generates and sustains his deepest concerns. Man is no longer a cosmic accident, a homeless wan-

derer in a dreary scene. His striving, his ideals, his very picturing of God, is the work of nature herself concentrated in human form. Nature's potentialities are to be read just as truly in the imagination of the artist, the vision of the prophet, the truth of the scientist, as in whirling sun or crawling insect. The ultimate fate of things is far more of a mystery than in the simple days of the nineties; and whatever determinism exists cannot gainsay the fact that man can control his own life through intelligence.

Today science shows us no alien world, but rather a scene in which human life is at home. The energies of man's spirit no longer beat against the iron bars of destiny. They have found an intelligible dwelling-place. But for those who share today's scientific faith, there is not even the motive that existed a generation ago to seek outside and beyond the realm of science another transcendental realm in which the human spirit could rest with God. Men made that flight because so much of their experience was left inexplicable in terms of 19th century physics. The science of the present explains that experience, and fits it into the nature it describes. There is room for man's spiritual life within the world as it has revealed itself to scientific investigation today.

But there is no room for much of the furniture amidst which man moved in traditional Judaism and Christianity. There is no room for a God save in the aspirations and imagination of men. Newtonian physics may have crumbled, but neither Einstein nor Planck has found any concept that can pass as di-

vine. There is no room for an immortal spirit in man's frame that can leave its earthly habitation to dwell in any heavenly habitation beyond the limits of Space-Time. Gods man can set up and worship, and an immortal quality of soul he can achieve. But these things, so far as science can say, are part of the deep experience of human life, not part of the furniture of the heavens.

It is not that any scientific faith could conceivably disprove such possibilities; it is rather that it makes them irrelevant. The man who thinks in terms of modern psychology simply does not entertain the notion of an immortal soul; it does not figure among his concepts. The man who trusts physical science to describe the world finds no conceivable place into which he can fit a deity. Force and energy he discovers, yes; but nowhere save in human life force and energy that has moral qualities, that makes consistently for ends men could approve. To deify the radiant energy of the electro-magnetic field is to show complete indifference to all that generations of religious prophets have found worthy of human worship. Such force men will in their wisdom respect and utilize as they are able; but unless they are willing to worship Moloch, they will not find it divine, save as it manifests itself in men.

Were their religious faith strong enough, men confronting such a world might still insist that though science does not reveal him, there is a God, and though the laboratory finds it not, man nevertheless does possess an immortal soul. Plenty of hon-

est scientists do. But such a cleaving to two faiths overlooks what has been discovered about religious belief itself. It may explain the world in scientific terms; it does not profit by the light investigation has thrown on man and his religious life. If contemporary physics no longer maintains the untenable view that religion is an illusion, anthropology and psychology do reveal it as a very human achievement. And it is above all today the working out of the scientific faith as directed towards the analysis of man's individual and social experience, that tends to destroy, for those who share it, any religious interpretation of the world.

It is the anthropologists who have undertaken the most serious study of the religious life in all its manifestations. The wide body of data they have collected, from societies and groups scattered all over the world, has freed them from the provincialism of those who know only the highly developed religious institutions of a few cultures. Even the psychologists have been limited for the most part to the religious experiences of men living in a single tradition. Above all, the anthropologists have studied the life of groups of men, of human activity in its natural social setting. They have never considered religion in isolation from other human concerns; they have always seen it as part of an entire round of activities, of an integrated group culture. This basic attitude of theirs has, to be sure, sometimes obscured the importance of individual differences in religious feeling, of religious experiences as some-

thing inward and highly personal. The data of the anthropologist have to be supplemented by psychological studies and by religious biography. But the anthropologist has been able, as no other, to appreciate the nature of religion in all its ramifications, and the function it has played in relation to all the other attitudes and concerns of men. He alone has viewed religious activity as a whole.

The earliest students, in the days of Spencer and Tylor, naturally tried to interpret the religious life they were investigating in terms of the dominant 19th century religious interest. They assumed that the core of religion consisted in certain beliefs, and they asked what beliefs were held in common by all groups. They concluded that religion was animism, the belief in disembodied spirits. The next generation was primarily interested in the social structure of human groups, and they in turn came to see religion rather as a form of social organization, a set of emotional attitudes clustered about the various relations of the group. They were struck by the prevalence of totemism, the emotional identification of tribal groups with sacred animals, and by the powerful taboos or social prohibitions whose enforcement and regulation seemed so central. This social interpretation, led by Durkheim, has dominated thinking for the last thirty years. Present-day anthropologists, however, have observed too many societies to believe that any such simple theories can explain the wide diversity of religious life. They have tried to study the actual functioning of societies

and cultures, and to discover what religious attitudes and activities have really meant to the men who have shared them. They have come to realize that religion has been not a definite institution that can be isolated from the texture of life, but an organization of the feelings and the activities of men around all those elements in their experience that have seemed emotionally significant. Religion has expressed and colored the entire round of a culture, it has embraced everything in human life that men have deeply felt. It has consecrated the normal social relations, the accustomed techniques of living; it has built up an intensity of emotional repugnance to any violation of the ordinary procedure. It has also given particular expression to men's feelings and acts in the face of whatever in their experience seemed extraordinary and mysterious.

The essence of the religious life has thus appeared to be primarily ritual, that is, conduct accompanied by deep feeling. It has been something lived rather than something thought out, in simpler groups something danced out, performed. Such ritual is naturally concerned with what seem the most important acts and crises of a people's life. It grows up as the appropriate reaction to such social activities as hunting and war, planting and harvesting. It also marks individual crises like birth, adolescence, marriage, and death. Men feel these matters deeply, and their emotion expresses itself in rite and ceremony. Men feel also the mysterious, the unexpected, the unlooked-for, the unfamiliar. Before the manifold

impingements of a careless nature on their accustomed routines, they experience awe and dread. There is need of appeasement, of propitiation, some holy dance, some sacred rite. The group remembers those who in the past have been successful in an uncertain world, and, remembering, invokes their aid. This feeling of awe, fear, respect, helplessness, dependence, demands that something be done.

The very doing seems to help. It has an efficacy of its own. Magic rites multiply. Men who intensely desire something find themselves doing that which they desire. They make rain-like noises in their hope of rain; they celebrate victory in the hope that victory may come. For an agricultural society, the rebirth of vegetation in the spring is of momentous concern; what more natural than to practice sympathetic magic, and by frenzied human procreation seek to invoke the fecundity of Nature? Winter kills, and spring revives; let man too, in some baptismal rite, die and be born anew.

Such intensely felt action evokes its own object. The imagination pictures some vague power back of the rhythm of nature, back of the continuing life of the tribe, back of the unexpected incursions of awesome forces. This power, this *mana,* can be appeased by proper rites and sacrifices; it can be used by magic formulæ; it can be acquired by eating the sacred animal in which it resides, or bathing in its blood. Gradually these very acts gave rise to man-like beings with which they were concerned. Myths arose to people the imagination with spirits; the gods were

born out of the projected emotion with which men met a precarious world. Some were the personification of natural forces, the Sun that warmed crops, the mysterious Mother of the gods who caused increase in nature and man alike. Some dwelt in sacred rocks or groves, or in holy animals. Some were ancestors of the tribe. When curiosity sought to bring order out of the wild exuberance of primitive mythology, the gods were grouped together in a comprehensive pantheon. Peoples like the Greeks or Hindus, who craved intellectual harmony, slowly developed the notion of one all-controlling divine power. Others, like the Hebrews, arrived at monotheism rather by insisting on the universality of their tribal taboos.

As cultures developed, these intellectual and moral urges came to play a larger part. Myths were ordered into an explanation of the world, its origin and its development; they merged insensibly into speculative science. Rites and magic took on moral significance; they came to be symbols of moral customs and ideals. Reformers arose, prophets and leaders, who sought to remould the old materials into more spiritual form. They in turn faded into the realm of magic and myth; rites gathered about them. Sacred books set down the customs and ritual, the messages of the prophets, the aspirations of the people. The great civilizations developed corresponding organizations of the religious life, with complex social institutions, elaborate lore, immemorial ritual. Together with ancient spells and rites,

sacrifices, prayers, and forms of worship, they embodied the successive insights of spiritual geniuses.

It is such a conception of the nature and function of religion that students of primitive society and comparative religion have arrived at. Viewed as an historical phenomenon, religion has been an organization of man's emotions and conduct. It has been a way of feeling and acting in the face of the important concerns of life. In societies that have developed an intellectual interest, it has also been a way of thinking and believing; but belief has with few exceptions been a secondary and derived matter. Religion was a social force before the gods were born; it has persisted in civilizations like India and China and Greece where the gods have given way to other less personal interpretations of life. All religious traditions contain a host of rites and forms that are obviously survivals from primitive days; they have been successively reinterpreted and reclothed with moral and spiritual significance. In minimizing the intellectual content of religion, the Romantic philosophies of Schleiermacher and Ritschl were right. Religion does not offer an explanation of anything; it is a life to be lived.

Scholars who have studied the mass of objective data about other religions cannot but view Judaism and Christianity in the same light. They too are organized about primitive survivals. Their rituals and festivals are not distinctive. The Christian Christmas and Easter are built on ancient agricultural rites celebrating the death and rebirth of the vital

forces of nature. The Christian sacraments are paralleled by multitudes of similar rites of sympathetic magic. It is common to gain divine power by partaking of the body of the god. The Christian mystery of the incarnation and the resurrection is an ancient myth found in many peoples; it seems to have crystallized out of the immemorial ritual for appeasing the generative forces of nature and sharing their phallic power. The Ten Commandments are ancient tribal taboos. The God of the Scriptures is a projection of man's emotional need for help and sustenance, of his sense of dependence and his urgent cry for help. The faith in personal survival is perchance an offshoot of phallic ritual.

Yet this core of magic rite and imaginative myth has served to organize the emotional and moral life of highly civilized peoples. It has been enriched by the ethical insight of prophet after prophet, until its symbols have come to express the highest human aspiration and the most generous sympathies. It has furnished a poetic interpretation of the heights and depths of human experience, an imaginative wisdom for the conduct of life, a common realm in which generations can live and move, a wealth of imagery and symbol to inspire the artist. It has focussed men's ambitions and aspirations, clarified them, and led them to new insight. It has given them courage and power and consolation, in communion with their fellows and with the saints who lived of old. It has provided another world for the mind of man to dwell in, an idealization of experience from whose

contemplation men return with renewed vigor. The enriching of this realm of insight and imagination until it could express every human interest, every feeling, every action, every thought, has been the greatest human achievement of Christendom.

The traditionalist may still insist that the Christian sacrament has an efficacious supernatural power, that the Christian God has a substantial existence and the Christian hope of immortality is rooted in fact. The student of religions can see no uniqueness in Christianity, save as Christian men of genius have elaborated their common primitive materials with unique power. To him, the efficacy of the sacrament lies in its uniting men with each other and with the past in a common bond of life and aspiration. The truth of Christian doctrine lies in its imaginative rendering of the experiences of human living, in its poetic relevance to life. For he cannot but think he has come to understand religion as the literal-minded believer does not. It matters not that physics offers no refutation. His study of religion itself does.

The psychologist for his part has scrutinized religious experiences as they are felt by the individual man. He has been hindered by the impoverishment of our own religious life. He has selected those experiences prominent in Protestantism, and compared with them similar types elsewhere. Like William James, he has emphasized religious conversion, the personal communion with God, intense intellectual conviction; he has neglected the more normal course of the religious life. But he too has thrown a flood

of light on the human roots of the religious emotions. He has shown how close they are to the imperious sexual urge of man; how they are most intense in times of sexual crisis, like adolescence; how they develop to compensate for a faulty sexual adjustment; how much of religious imagery is sexual in nature, how easily the ascetic's repressions produce the visions he desires. He has analysed the emotional crisis of conversion, and disentangled the mechanism of the sense of sin and the power of grace. He explains how men project their desires into a compensatory realm, how they flee from reality into the wish-fulfilment of some heaven or spiritual realm. He traces the natural causes of the apocalyptic faiths in a world to be made new. He has sympathetically studied the mystic, and respects the enhanced sense of the value of life his experience produces. But he has shown how various drugs can effect the same enriching of life. He has noted that the mystic's vision is always in terms of the ideas of his own religious tradition, and he can find in it no independent testimony for the validity of religious doctrines. He has pointed to the factors that condition intense religious conviction,—early training, social pressure, emotional crises, needs for adjustment to the environment. He too sees in the religious life a matter of emotional organization, a necessary but purely human adaptation to the world. He too finds in it little to justify any religious interpretation of the world as a whole, any impingement of a God into human life. But he is also too familiar with the

strength and power of religious feeling, too aware of the necessity of some religious expression for the deeper concerns of man's life, to dismiss religion because it is not a way of arriving at truth. He respects it for what it is, and hopes that his clarification will enable it to perform more effectively its proper function.

In the 19th century it was possible for men to maintain that even though Christianity offered no explanation of the universe that could compete with that of science, it still possessed a moral core of unquestioned truth. Moses might not have known the true story of creation, but at least he had perceived the eternal laws of righteousness. The Bible after all was not a text-book in natural science; but it was the supreme authority in ethics. Jesus of Nazareth might be in no unique sense divine; but he was the final moral prophet. Men turned eagerly from the traditional and, it might be, mythical religion about Jesus to the teachings of Jesus himself, to the Sermon on the Mount and the preaching of the Kingdom. Here was a revelation of universal and absolute ethical truth.

Today the moral authority of the Christian tradition is as much in doubt as was its intellectual authority fifty years ago. Our confidence has been shaken primarily by the new social conditions of our lives. Much of the old counsel has been revealed as obviously insufficient in a world of mass production, city life, and complexly interrelated groups. The shock of the new society has torn us loose from the

individualism, the this-worldly asceticism of the commercial age. In our conduct we are facing today the transformation of our customs and our standards as a fact, not merely as a theory. But science, especially psychology and social science, has played its full share in justifying this transformation, and in suggesting still more radical changes. Scientific facts have helped us to understand the elements that enter into human conduct, and how its organization is effected. The faith in scientific inquiry and experimentalism has overshadowed faith in the moral authority of the Christian tradition. Science is today as bitterly in conflict with the ethical wisdom of the saints and prophets as it is with the world-view of the theologians.

Psychology has analysed human nature into a complex organization of impulses and habits. It has shown that every human being comes into the world a mass of potentialities for action, largely unorganized and conflicting. The process of growth is the adaptation of these impulses to each other and to the environment, both physical and social, in which the child lives. There are certain biological needs, like the craving for food and shelter and rest and sexual expression, shared by every man; but the determining mould in which they develop, as well as the more complicated habits which men form, is given by the culture of the particular group into which the man is born. Man owes his every feeling, his every thought, his every way of acting, to the group life that makes his existence possible. His re-

ligious experiences, his deepest aspirations, his very conscience itself, are social habits.

Such a view of human nature has seemed, for those who have taken it as a matter of course, to make many of the older Christian ideals irrelevant. They have found in it justification for abandoning the age-long ascetic attempt to suppress completely many of man's impulses. Prosperity has made such renunciation useless; psychology has laid bare the far-reaching consequences in emotional disturbance and distorted lives that have followed it. Men have found it wiser to attempt a harmonious organization of all human impulses into a balanced whole. The spirituality and asceticism that forsook the world and stamped on the flesh they see as compensatory ideals, the sour-grapes philosophy of peoples who would not admit that what they wanted and could not get was nevertheless good. A life of unremitting toil, of plain fare, of scorn for pleasure or useless activity, they see as warping and stunting. The sexual urge, so long an outlaw, psychology reveals as the basic force of life. A faulty sexual adjustment, above all the complete denial of sexual expression, it finds to issue in nervous disorders, in maiming perversions, in all manner of illicit sexual excess. The older sex attitudes it sees as a mixture of property notions and purity complexes. Men impressed with these facts have grown impatient with the narrow codes that tried to force men into a harsh mould. To them, the task of the moral life seems rather the building up of a more flexible or-

ganization of vital impulses. The old external authority of a moral law should be replaced by self-control in the light of a more adequate ideal.

Such a view of human nature destroys, also, the rational basis of the older individualism. The group is the real unit; individual differentiation itself can develop only within a social life. The liberal and humanitarian ideals in which Christian morality had finally issued seem likewise unreal. Man is hardly a reasoning creature; his enlightened self-interest is no safe guide. Individual differences in temperament and intellectual ability are so great that doubt has been cast on the gospels of equality and democracy. Men need some stronger motive than the mere appeal to liberty if they are to adjust satisfactorily the complex group-relations of the modern world. All these ideals have been placed definitely in their historical setting, as the expression of needs that have been fundamentally transformed today. To those who realize how human nature is organized to fit its environment, hardly a moral attitude of the past but seems to date. They demand that standards be built up around our real needs today.

Anthropology brings its facts also to convince us that our moral codes are, like those of every society, the conventions and folkways of our tribe. It displays the panorama of human mores in its stupefying variety, to dispel forever the notion of a universal and immutable moral law. Everything we abhor has been somewhere an honored practice, everything we admire has been the object of repugnance and

taboo. How can we be so blind as to believe in the permanence of any code, any ideal? How can we feel any sanctity in our own changing standards? Why single out a particular scheme for holding property from so many, why cherish one sexual code above the thousand others? To the clear scrutiny of the anthropologist, folkways are followed because they are folkways; and they change when conditions change. The custom of the country can hallow any act.

To this mass of facts, breaking down the notion of any sacred or natural law of conduct, there has been added the permeating influence of the scientific spirit. The mind that thinks in terms of constant questioning, that seeks ever better hypotheses and subjects them to rigid testing, is no friend to a moral tradition that rests on authority. It looks on the obvious maladjustment of our traditional mores, and it bids us criticise, experiment, reconstruct. It has little reverence for mere convention; it has no more respect for the voice of prophets of old. Who were the Jews that they could lay down laws for us to follow? Has not our knowledge grown, has not our life changed?

To men convinced of the relativity of all moral standards, and firm in the scientific faith in criticism and experiment, even the final stand of the liberals on the teachings of Jesus is unconvincing. Could a simple carpenter in Galilee two thousand years ago have uttered the final word on human relationships? Granted his ethical insight, is there nothing more

to be learned? Can we really regulate marriage today, with all its complex problems, by insisting that man shall not put asunder what God hath joined together? Is simple, uncalculating compassion, is purity of heart, is brotherly love, enough with which to face the intricate network of modern industrialism? Are we to live our social life by taking no thought for the morrow?

It is easy to see that our changing moral habits and standards owe little to the spirit of genuine scientific experimentation. But would such a spirit be any more congenial to the ideals of the past? Even if it did not recklessly abandon all the tested moral wisdom of the past, and foolishly attempt to begin from the ground up with new experiments, would it show much reverence for the deeper moral insights of the ethical geniuses of the past? Such ultimate ideals have been uttered by those who spoke with authority; they express a faith that cannot be tested otherwise than in human living, for it supplies itself the ultimate test of life. They are not the fruits of experiment, they are its premises. Can such a moral faith, the conviction of the worth of every human personality, the very core of our religious tradition, share the allegiance of men committed to the scientific faith?

This after all is the most serious question raised by the presence of science in our civilization. Is the scientific temper of mind ultimately compatible with any kind of religious faith? Can any other supreme allegiance, any other final organization of man's

emotional loyalties, live in the same world with the scientific spirit? Can a man really absorb the tentative, provisional entertainment of all ideas as hypotheses, to be rigorously criticised and replaced by others more able to pass the tests, and at the same time cherish in feeling and action the conviction of the prophet or saint of old? Can he vigorously crusade for a right that is in his mind relative and provisional? Can he pour out his heart in worship of an ideal or a force he knows may be discarded tomorrow? Can there be such a thing as an experimental faith?

This is a question, perhaps, that only the wholehearted scientist need answer. And for him it will be true, as it always has been, that the pursuit of truth will be his faith, the emotional focus of his life. There is no danger that any large number of men will ever share the scientific temper of mind. Few even of scientists in the past have possessed it unalloyed. Yet it is this scientific faith that, far more than any specific discovery, or than any definite technique of thinking, seems ultimately hostile to the traditional expression of the religious life. It is this faith that is central in our most recent philosophies; it is this faith that is spreading as scientific techniques are slowly being employed in human affairs. There seems some reason to look for its increase as science comes to deal with human problems. With it the religion of educated men will have to come to terms.

The scientific temper of mind brings with it cer-

tain habits of thinking that make it difficult for men to share older attitudes. It demands exactitude rather than vagueness, the precise formulation of ideas. It demands scrupulous objective measurement and testing, and looks askance on what cannot be so measured. It demands that ideas be such as can be made public, be shared by others, and be held on the basis of objective evidence. It carries with it the habit of looking for more than is at any moment embodied in established knowledge, and it seeks actively to modify and correct that knowledge. It sees truth as something provisional, the hypothesis that for the present best passes the recognized tests. It welcomes further refinements of those tests themselves.

In contrast with this attitude, all older faiths, religious and moral, have been passionately certain of their validity. They have been sure that they possessed final Truth. They have rested on inner conviction, on experiences that in their very nature were personal and private. The prophet has proclaimed Righteousness, convinced in his heart that he has found the moral structure of the universe. The saint has been certain that he has seen God. Men have sought and found a cosmic sanction for their ideals; they have been able to live and to act only as they were sure God and the laws of nature were on their side.

And, in all truth, there is that in human nature that demands unquestioned allegiance to some final

end. The scientist has it, in his science. The legislator, the revolutionist, the man of action, all possess it. The average man finds it in his conventional code and beliefs. There must be something transcendent, something immune to the ordinary successes and failures of living, in that to which men thus give their supreme allegiance. It must have an authority not to be overthrown by the hypothesis of the moment, by the chance criticism of a careless mind. For religion this supreme thing needful has been set over against all else as divine. There is the precious thing, and there is, besides, everything else. Our secular faiths elevate to this sacred position the national state, or the Communist ideal.

To the scientific temper of mind, nothing is sacred and untouchable, nothing is immune to questioning and criticism. Can men to whom such habits of thought have become second nature, share a faith in the transcendent importance of that which they know is not final Truth? Can the religious life learn experimental flexibility from the spirit of science, without sacrificing the basic faith in terms of which it organizes man's feelings and action?

We do not know. That is one experiment that remains to be tried. But if this is the ultimate conflict between science and religion, it is also a conflict between science and the whole of human life. Man can adjust his feelings to any interpretation of his experience; he can organize his emotions around any ideal. It remains to be seen whether he can renounce

the possibility of final interpretation, whether he can really live by a consciously provisional ideal. Until he can, aspiration and knowledge will not be at harmony.

Chapter IV

THE RELIGIOUS TRADITION AND INDUSTRIAL CIVILIZATION

The very insight gained by social science into the nature and function of religion has placed the intellectual struggle of the last hundred years in a proper perspective. However central they may have become in the Protestant tradition, beliefs are after all not the primary element of the religious life. That life is concerned with the emotional attitudes and drives of men as they face the significant and crucial experiences of their world; and any intellectual interpretation they may give to their deepest feelings, any mythological embroidery by the imagination, any formulation of theological beliefs, is at most a secondary and derived matter. Men will attempt inevitably to explain their world; they will try to create some intelligible picture into which their profounder experiences will fit. These rationalizations of their experience will change as their knowledge widens; traditional lore, even science respectable enough in its day, will give way to science better able to pass more rigorous tests. Naturally, the wrench of readjustment will prove hardest with just those beliefs, like that in a cosmic deity, that have been

vitally connected with fundamental emotional attitudes. But the particular terms and concepts by means of which men build a world in which their minds rest satisfied, are incidental to the religious life itself.

So long as their basic emotional experiences remain unaltered, it makes ultimately little difference what system of scientific interpretation men accept. Their religion will not be significantly changed. Thus it is doubtful whether the assimilation of Aristotelian science by medieval Christendom had much effect on the currents of religious feeling. Indeed, the average American farmer of the 19th century faced his world with much the same attitudes held by the 12th century European peasant. Men may even come to adopt a scheme for describing their world that deprives traditional beliefs of any explanatory relevance, and still cherish the older system of thought because of its symbolic rendering of their experiences. Something of the sort happened to the myths of the Greek gods in the Hellenistic age; it has happened again and again in India, and it seems to be happening for many Westerners today. To discover a wholly new world by scientific methods, and fully to assimilate its meaning, is bound to bring with it certain emotional changes as well; but so long as the roots of the old feelings are there, it is surprising how little difference a changed picture of the world really makes. The adoption of modern astronomical views has been almost universal in the last two centuries; yet the old feelings of sin and

cosmic dependence made themselves as much at home in an infinite universe as ever they were in the tight little cosmos of Ptolemy and Aristotle.

It is when the fundamental experiences of man's life themselves are altered that profound religious changes occur. The religious life of Protestantism has differed greatly from that of Catholicism. The difference lies, however, not in the realm of theological belief; for the Protestants took over, and most of them preserved until well through the 19th century, nine-tenths of the ideas of Augustine and the Catholic Church. The Protestant Reformation was no fundamental intellectual revolution; it was the response to a basic revolution in man's actual life. Protestantism has been the emotional consecration of the individualized social experience of the modern period. In it men came not so much to think as to feel differently about a changed texture of living.

While the men of the 19th century were painfully trying to solve the intellectual perplexities involved in the rise of new beliefs, a far more fundamental change was coming over their entire experience. The subtle changes brought about by the new industrial and city life in which they were engulfed caused no logical conflict with older beliefs, and were hence allowed to pass almost unnoticed. But they have touched the very core of the religious life, for they have transformed the basic feelings and emotions with which men confront their world. For every man alienated from the church by scientific ideas or

devotion to the scientific spirit, there are dozens who are dissatisfied with its social attitudes in our industrial world, and hundreds who, with no intellectual doubts to trouble them, have found their thoughts and feelings fully occupied with the host of other interests and diversions of the machine age. What does it matter that subtle thinkers have found a way to combine the old beliefs with the faith in science, if those beliefs have ceased to express anything in their own experience, if the older religious faith is at variance with all they really care for? Of what use is it to talk even of the poetic and imaginative relevance of traditional creeds to the experiences of living, if the experiences of which they are the symbolic interpretation no longer play a part in the life of the modern man? Why attempt to point out the profoundly moving human wisdom of Augustine's interpretation of sin, when the very experience of sin itself strikes so many today as a pathological and incomprehensible mystery?

The real religious revolution of the 19th century, a revolution whose full effects are only beginning to be felt today, has been just this fundamental alteration in man's experience. The significant and crucial experiences of life have themselves been transformed; inevitably the emotional attitudes and drives that formed the basis of the old religious life have given way to others. Secular faiths and interests have pushed their way in to compete with traditional religion. The peculiar need of personal salvation that formed the core of Protestant orthodoxy

has tended to become increasingly remote. The basic religious emotions themselves have become for many men irrelevant to their daily experience.

Nothing is more obvious to the average preacher than the host of new interests and diversions with which he has to compete in the modern city. He does not often realize, however, that this crowding out of religion as irrelevant, this pushing of it into an out-of-the-way corner of men's lives, is but the culmination of a general secularization of living that has been steadily growing since pre-Reformation days. In medieval Christendom, as in all primitive societies, religion was not a realm apart, but an intensity of feeling that colored all men did. Every act, from tilling the soil to making and selling goods, to robbing and plundering itself, received religious consecration and the benediction of some saint. In the Puritanism of the early modern period religion was confined to the realm of private conduct and sexual morality; if the Sabbath was above all holy, it was largely because the work of the week had grown secular. Modern invention has conquered the Sabbath too; it is the rare church that can compete successfully with the Sunday paper, the auto, the golf-links, the movies, the radio, and the rest of our amusements. The country dweller found his social life centering in the church; he found in religion the one great interest, social and intellectual, that could lift him out of his daily routine. In our specialized life there are multitudes of agencies for doing all these things far more satisfactorily than the church

can hope to do. Even when it embraces them it seems to be playing a losing game. In the manifold activities of the modern institutional church any peculiar religious significance is rarely present; somehow a dance for the building-fund of the new parish hall seems less of a religious experience than a festival in honor of the patron saint. And any minister knows that his "social activities" spring less from real need than from the fervent desire to attract and hold members. The church itself has been secularized. Its very members continue a half-hearted support, from motives of purely traditional attachment, of personal loyalty to the minister, of social prestige, because they do not wish to live in a community without a church.

The type of religious experience that was central in the evangelical orthodoxy of the 19th century, the deep conviction of sin and the intense need of personal conversion and salvation, has for many in our modern world simply lost all reality. To them the preaching of Christ crucified, of the vicarious atonement, is incomprehensible, for they feel no inner struggle of flesh and spirit. They may be passionately convinced that all is not right with the world; but they feel no personal guilt. Wrong they conceive rather in social terms, to be dealt with by social techniques; and their personal conduct does not present to them problems that fit into a harsh dualism of righteousness and evil. This waning of the "sense of sin" in almost a single generation is one of the remarkable religious phenomena of our times. It does

not necessarily mean a subsiding of religious interest; but it does mean that the emotions of the religious life have been attached to new objects. American investigators of the psychology of religion have naturally concentrated on sin and conversion as characteristic of Protestant orthodoxy. They need to recognize the far wider range of religious feeling in which this specific experience may play no part.

Yet our industrial civilization seems to foster a type of social experience that is in even deeper conflict with those feelings to which traditional Judaism and Christianity have appealed. These historic faiths grew up in an agricultural world. They were built around attitudes natural to tillers of the soil, to those directly dependent on the vagaries of nature. The Christian and Jewish rituals are rooted in agricultural rites and feelings. Humility and awe, dependence on nature, lamentation and thanksgiving; these feelings are those of men who come into daily contact with natural forces, and have to adjust their lives in some way to them. It has often been remarked how these ancient religions appeal most strongly to the farmer and the sailor. The world of the Psalms is a world of dependence on nature. The world of the modern city dweller is not. He is dependent on the functioning of machinery, on the complex coöperation of his fellowmen. He is accustomed to think of his problems in terms, not of emotional resignation, but of active manipulation. Some improved machine, some social measure, will accomplish his ends. Where he has an emotional re-

action to his human, technological world, it is either of passionate striving for social change, or else of dumb acquiescence in an immutable order. His emotional life has become increasingly a thing of the leisure hours; and there he seeks pleasure, thrills, excitement, emotional debauch, as a release from the repressions of the daily routine. In neither case are the traditional cosmic religious feelings called to life. It is only in the face of death that he still stands silent before invincible power; and even there he is coming more and more to put his faith in medical techniques.

Traditional attitudes are deeply engrained in our whole culture; they are inescapable for one familiar with the literary record. But everything in men's daily lives is against them. It is a serious question how long they can be made basic in a living religious faith. Already they have little place or force in men's ordinary experience. The crises that there awaken significant emotional response are less and less concerned with man's relation to nature, and more and more with his relations to his fellows. They cluster about social, human, non-cosmic faiths.

These social, secular faiths are beyond question the strongest religious forces of the present day. For a century nationalism, patriotism and the worship of the flag, the most enduring heritage of the religious revivals of the Romantic era, has been the most widely shared religion of the Western world. It alone has been able to cut across class lines and call forth the devotion of all men. Again and again

Christian churches have attached themselves to it, reaping the harvest of a genuine and powerful religious life. God the Father has been for many merged in England or Germany or America.

The cult of prosperity, too, has assumed in the United States all the emotional fervor of a true religion. Men worship Pluto in his temples on Wall Street; many of them have taken on the sanctified atmosphere of churches. There are rites of translation in swift chariots; men find their visions of heaven in Roxy's cathedral, and there contemplate the stars in their glory. Christian churches and Jewish temples have found little to object to in this new faith.

There are a host of secular, humanitarian faiths, sometimes posing as Christianity, sometimes in bitter opposition to it. The longings of the oppressed have always been a fertile ground for new religions; and in our industrial world many have arisen to express the ever-fresh millennial hope. Every traveler in Communist Russia has remarked that here was a living religion, living as no other religion is living in our Western world, clothing social aspirations in many of the inherited forms of traditional piety. From intolerant and fanatical Communism to the more liberal and less fiercely orthodox socialisms and labor faiths of the West, there are new religions in the making, basing themselves frankly on what men today find significant and crucial. In every case there is a genuine continuity of form or spirit with the older types of religious life.

As yet, these social and humanitarian faiths are minority religions, even when they are found in the organized churches. Those churches as a whole quite inevitably express the major interests of the people who are loyal to them. Our life has been secularized; its vital concerns are found in pew and pulpit. If Babbittry has triumphed in the churches, it is only because Babbittry really embodies the attitude of those who there worship. The more democratically organized communions, Protestant and Jewish, naturally reflect complacency and the cult of prosperity and pleasure more fully than those like Catholicism and orthodox Judaism, where a great tradition can stand somewhat aloof from passing enthusiasms. Doctrinal tenets make little difference; fundamentalist and liberal alike in the city seize every secular appeal they can find to compete with other amusements. They range from earnest social service to sensational sermons on sexual sin; they stage religious vaudeville and angle for publicity. If they do not succeed in capturing the permanent loyalty of their followers, it is not for want of coming to terms with the real interests of the day; it is only because large-scale financing can offer a better article.

Indeed, the bitterest critic of organized religion can hardly accuse it today of genuine conservatism. The observer from those European lands where something of the older civilization is still preserved, is amazed at the extent to which even Catholicism in America has capitulated to the currents of contem-

porary life. Protestantism and Judaism have made an even more complete surrender. To become the mouthpiece of the business spirit, to glorify competitive "service," to see Jesus as the first advertising man, and the Last Supper as the first Rotary Club Luncheon,—this is a new story for even the chameleon forms of Christianity. Here and there, in some orthodox synagogue where bearded scholars still pore over the Talmud, in some remote rural church where Chambers of Commerce are unknown, there is a religious life that has not assimilated the gospel of prosperity; and to these reactionary currents men can turn with relief. The Catholic tradition, not finding as yet its center of gravity in industrialism, often appears the one refuge from the crudities of the worship of the Golden Calf.

This very acquiescence in contemporary mores does mean, of course, that organized religion has largely come to express the attitudes of those satisfied with the present dispensation. If it marks a sharp break with the tradition of spirituality and renunciation, it is at the same time the vehicle of social conservatism. It is a commonplace that in the cities Protestantism and Judaism have come to embody so completely the spirit of the middle class that they have little attraction for the mass of working men. Some few of the latter find their vital interests in stirring social faiths; the great majority, in purely secular enjoyments. Catholicism has its roots among the newcomers who have not yet pulled themselves up in the economic scale; and for these workers

racial and economic motives create a firm loyalty to the Church. As so often in modern Europe, Catholicism in America serves as a cohesive force for the under-dog. But no one would accuse the hierarchy of setting any obstacles in the way of complete "Americanization." As a whole the American Church has certainly not succumbed to the temptation to oppose the acceptance of the present social order.

Everywhere the tide of the new worldly morality of prosperity is rising. The long centuries that preached renunciation and spirituality have been forgotten. With a golden flood pouring from the machine and trickling down to all who traffic with it, asceticism in any form, either medieval otherworldiness or the this-worldly abstinence from pleasure and far-seeing thrift of the Puritan, seems both futile and wrong. The societies that hovered always at the starvation level may have required a gospel that promised the one thing needful in the midst of want. Now that man's inventive power has removed the fear of starvation, and kindled the hope of boundless wealth, industrialism has inevitably replaced the old ethic of renunciation with an ethic of enjoyment, a pursuit of material satisfactions. Man no longer lives by meat and drink alone; he needs as well plumbing and a radio and a car and money for countless other necessities. He laughs at thrift when it is so easy to buy on the installment plan. He does not renounce and abstain; he wants a good time. So fundamental and novel a change is this in

social experience, that most of the old and tried moral wisdom seems quite irrelevant. That wisdom addressed itself to the consolation of souls for whom life held naught but bitter bread; but the problems of today are how to master the wealth of the machine. The question of ordering and controlling the rich raw materials of an abundant life hardly occurred to the Hebrew prophets, to Jesus, to the Christian saints or the Puritan preachers. They are central today.

As a part of this new ethic of enjoyment there has come a revolution in our sexual ideals. Sex too is something not to be fought back in the search for an impossible purity; it is a natural force to be tasted and enjoyed to the very full. The many social factors that have overthrown sexual asceticism are too complex to enter into; ideals of personal liberty, of Romantic love, the changed status of woman economically and politically, the destruction of sexual taboos through knowledge, all have played a part. The important fact remains that the repression of the sexual urge as at best a necessary evil was written into the core of the moral tradition of Catholics and Protestants alike, and enforced by the strongest supernatural sanctions; and it is now crumbling to pieces. If there is one problem of conflict with tradition that today exercises young people above all others, it is just this matter of the relations between man and woman. It is for them far more vital than belief in God or immortality. It is on sexual matters that our boys and girls are losing

their faith in the counsel of religion. The present generation of parents found it so hard themselves to break away from the past that they have been unable to face honestly the serious problems of a new ordering of sexual relations. They have, it seems, little to offer; and the result is chaos and the confused thought of the emancipated. Here above all it is not easy to substitute the needed self-control for the older external threats and regimentation.

Traditional Hebrew-Christian morality had little place for wisdom and intelligence in the right use of prosperity. It bade men lay not up treasures on earth, it counseled them to sell all they had and give to the poor, it urged them to take no thought for the morrow, it sanctified poverty and decried the love of pleasure and comfort. It saw sex as an evil thing to be held within strictest bounds; it was the expression of original sin, a disgraceful necessity of procreation. Even the less tortured Hebrews valued it only for the fruitful increase it brought, not as an indispensable note in the harmony of life. The Christians held it good for a man not to touch a woman; marriage they countenanced as a sorry concession to the burning of the flesh, and they were rarely able to distinguish between fornication and love. All alike was evil concupiscence. Even the Puritan's rejection of celibacy as the highest ideal sprang from no appreciation of the beneficent and ennobling power of sex at its best.

On still a third score the moral heart of the religious tradition has proved inadequate in the face

of today's experience. It offers no sufficient guidance for the complex problems of industrial society. Hebrew and Christian ideals were developed in a very simple group life. They offered counsel to individual men, calling them to righteousness, purity of heart, and love. They ordered at most the relations of a small group, the family or the early brotherhood of believers. They determined the attitudes individuals should take in the face of social oppression; but they never sought to hold forth a pattern for an entire society. Christianity grew up in an atmosphere in which private salvation was paramount. The Christian was to forsake the world and live apart with his chosen comrades. To this day earnest followers of Christ feel compelled to retreat from the problems of social organization to preserve the purity of their ideal. Whenever Christianity has tried to order a whole society, it has been compelled, as in the Middle Ages, to draw on other sources—barbarian codes or Greek thought—for its inspiration. And Protestantism led the way in disclaiming any attempt to control the commercial and national forces of the modern world.

The Gospel of Jesus has been rediscovered by religious liberals, and hailed as the highest moral wisdom for our life. Such general precepts as the Golden Rule would, to be sure, mitigate somewhat the worst evils that we experience today. But to arrive at any social ideal remotely adequate for the complex group relations of our unified world, demands far more than a generalization. It calls for an

expenditure of patient, careful thought utterly alien to the simple, compassionate spirit of Jesus of Nazareth. It was not his follower, Francis of Assisi, but Roman lawyers and Greek schoolmen, who worked out the Christian social ideals of the 13th century. Nor have modern imitators of Christ, like Gandhi, been able to counsel much more than the avoidance of the issue through retreat. One cannot find the path to social organization through doing unto one's neighbor as one would be done by. One cannot put an end to international anarchy by resisting not evil. Our society is confronted with problems of social adjustment that receive no answer in the past, because they are new problems. We must draw upon all we have in the way of ethical guidance, but we have not enough. Much more will have to be worked out in terms of our own experience. Hebrew righteousness and Christian love are not adequate for our moral needs; and no amount of devotion to the prophets or the Nazarene can obscure the bitter necessity for more. The ethics of Jesus cannot be final truth, final moral insight.

The forces of industrialism and city life have changed the very texture of our social experience. They have pushed traditional religious interests into a minor place, where only sentimental piety preserves them. They have made the types of religious experience on which Judaism and Christianity were founded increasingly irrelevant. New forms of religious experience, secular and social faiths, have sprung up to evince far more of vitality than can

be found in organized religion. The churches themselves have been largely captured by our rushing life, and the insight of prophet and saint has been forgotten. The very problems with which the moral core of the tradition dealt have faded into secondary importance in contemporary society, and the wisdom and guidance we need to order our new life aright are not to be found by recourse to the past alone.

In the midst of this disintegration of the older religious life, religious standards have been inevitably relaxed. The Hebrew-Christian tradition was built up over long generations; it came to embody the criticisms and insights of thousands of saints and prophets. Through their discoveries and their thought men came to discriminate between a better and a worse in the spiritual life. Worship of crude power, striving for ignoble ends, were replaced by higher standards of spirituality and right. In our present confusion many have lost sight of these precious gains. Men have in large measure reverted to more primitive types of religious experience. They deify might in their primitive nationalisms; they grow impatient of the sacredness of personality in their social faiths. They fall back on the crudest and most uncriticized passions. Struck by the irrelevance of organized Christianity, they have turned to the exploration of every variety of weird faith. The American scene has for a hundred years shown a colorful canvas of religious ventures inspired by earnest souls abysmally ignorant—ignorant of scientific knowledge, ignorant of the more precious ethi-

cal and religious wisdom that has been painfully garnered. It is today full of men and women, in the churches and without, who have found a resting place in some pitifully inadequate faith. The Orient has been drawn upon for half-understood ideas, torn from their context and deprived of all relevance to the experience from which they sprang. Oriental cults have gained followers that know nothing of a scientific understanding of the world, and foster a type of selfish, optimistic, and socially irresponsible spirituality that was superseded in Christendom two thousand years ago. Religions like Christian Science have arisen and flourished that, like the most primitive magic, set physical health as their highest ideal, and renounce all the insight into human suffering and striving for a better world that has been won since the first Hebrew prophet. Other religions have made personal and business success the one thing worth attaining.

Religious feelings and religious needs that demand organized expression are to be found in abundance in our new society. So great is the desire of men for historical continuity and emotional piety to the past, that the transformed religious life of our world will surely call itself by old and revered names. It will respect the prophets who have contributed to our present religious heritage. But if this altered Christianity involves too great a break with the historic formulations, though it display new vigor and many fine fruits as it comes really to express the significant moments of our lives, it will run

the risk of forgetting much that is too precious to be forgotten. At its worst Christianity is immeasurably superior to nationalism or Christian Science. Men are apt to rest too comfortably in the assurance that religion is inevitable and undying. The quality of the religion that will endure is the important thing. The danger is that in the shock of readjustment the standards built up in the past will be not raised but lowered. Novel, ignorant, and uncriticized types of religion can be strong and vigorous enough; but though they retain honored names, their moral and spiritual standards can be pitifully meager. It remains a question whether this present reconstruction of our religious tradition is to be a reversion to primitive passions or a further step toward the discernment of the highest.

Chapter V

THE COMPROMISE OF LIBERAL RELIGION

It must not be supposed that the men of the 19th century realized the ultimate bearing of the new scientific faith or the new social experience on their inherited religious life. Such a chronicle as we have recorded would not have been possible before the present day; indeed, we see all too dimly even as yet, and only through the inevitable glasses of the present. The problem of reconstruction was posed for our fathers in intellectual terms, as the finding of a more satisfactory philosophical interpretation of their experience. But even here it was only a small minority of the educated class who felt the full implication of what science meant to their cherished beliefs. Even during the reign of the mechanistic dogmas of 19th century physics, religiously-minded thinkers for the most part brushed them impatiently aside as obviously inadequate; and they were quite wise in so doing. But the application of scientific methods to the study of religion itself went on apace with little realization of its full import. Only the more thoughtful were aware of the gulf opening ever wider between the scientific faith and the traditional religious world-view.

At first the great bulk of religious leaders opposed with bitter hostility the newer scientific attitudes. They went up and down the land proclaiming the literal inspiration of the Bible from cover to cover, and denouncing the wicked and impious books they would not endanger their souls to read. Bishops grew furious at the very names of Darwin and Huxley; in their pulpits preachers descended to vituperation and abuse. There must be no trafficking with the idea that man is a monkey, or with any other theory of "science falsely so-called." This attack naturally called forth bold warriors on the side of "science," who started a new crusade against ignorance in high places. In England, in Germany, in France, in America, blasphemous anti-clericals like Haeckel and Ingersoll arose to ridicule the most holy tenets of Christian faith, and to paint in glowing terms a closed mechanistic universe as remote as possible from the foolish hopes of the pious. To the thoughtful, science and religion seemed to be in eternal conflict.

It was not long, however, before men began to wonder whether the opposition were really between religion and science, or only between narrow-minded theologians and unscientific zealots. Could not the main facts of science, nay, even the main tenets of the scientific faith, be reconciled with the essentials of the Christian tradition? Philosophy had saved religion when a similar conflict had broken out in the 18th century; could not philosophy come to the rescue again, and show how religion and science

could lie down together like the lion and the lamb? Would not the very philosophies that had then reconciled the two faiths do the work again? Many an earnest thinker set about the task of "harmonizing religion and science" once more. Unwilling to sacrifice the values of either the old faith or the new, they strove to reinterpret the historic doctrines in terms of the theories of the laboratory, or to discover a realm in which religion could still be true because science was refused admittance.

Thus was written another chapter in an old story. Another era of modernizing and liberalizing theology set in, this time in terms of the Romantic philosophies of the end of the 18th century. Christianity and Judaism have both seen many such periods. There have always been the same groups of men: the determined conservatives with their bitter hostility, the equally determined radicals with their narrow acceptance of the latest ideas, the mediating conciliators who ultimately bring the two currents together. The modernists are always few at first; by the second or third generation their ideas win general acceptance. Such mediators stand out as the great philosophic minds of the religious tradition. They take the new insights of prophets or the new ideas of thinkers and shape them into the intellectual forms in which they are ultimately embraced. Of such a type are the great system-builders, the Augustines and Thomases and Luthers and Calvins, who incorporate new bodies of knowledge or new values into the religious life. Sometimes the compromise is

intellectual, as with Thomas Aquinas. Sometimes it is moral, as with Luther. Sometimes it is both, as with Augustine.

In the 19th century the compromise was primarily intellectual; it hinged upon the adjustment of two bodies of beliefs to each other. This meant that the fundamental religious problem of the times was not so much practical as philosophical, and concerned the fitting together of two discordant types of knowledge into one system. It meant, conversely, that the primary philosophical problem of the century, dominating men's thought in a variety of forms, was precisely this one of religious compromise. 19th century philosophy started with the Romantic faith in a religious interpretation of the world as a whole, in a description of the universe that made man and man's interests central; and steadily and surely science was supplanting and undermining that faith. The thoughtful began with philosophic idealism, with believing that there was a transcendental world beyond the reach of scientific methods, where God still dwelt and the soul of man might be at home. In this real world time and space had no part; for science after all dealt only with mere appearance, and achieved no knowledge of reality. As the century wore on, men were forced to admit that such a saving philosophy was untenable. In the world of evolution, who could seriously maintain that time was unreal? In the age of trains and steamships and motor cars and airplanes, who could still consider space an illusion? In the civiliza-

tion of Germany, England, or America since 1870, who could dismiss science as a mere dream world? It simply could not be done. The arguments were irrefutable; but though they might prove it, men were incapable of believing it.

In the face of this vanishing faith in philosophic idealism, men might have accepted the inevitable; with the thinkers of the present generation, they might have recognized that scientific methods alone can be trusted to describe the world. They might have abandoned the attempt to find a divine force in the universe that has commanded and will guarantee the rather inadequate ideals of two thousand years ago, and turned their attention to the working out of a religious faith within the framework of the universe they were discovering. But their whole religious interests were too closely bound up with a cosmic sanction for human life for them to come to such a course till they had tried everything else. Instead, they searched frantically within the world of science for some new force to deify, some new interpretation of the world in religious terms. Men so much wanted to believe in God that they grasped at anything and everything science seemed to offer. God was the Unknowable, God was Ether, God was Evolution, God was Energy!

The idealists had their innings first. There are obviously two ways in which conflicting bodies of beliefs can be embraced in one system. One is to set them side by side, and carefully draw a line between them so that they cannot encroach on each other.

This is the easier method; it involves no fundamental alteration of either body, but only a precise adjustment of the two realms. This is the natural impulse of the average man, who preserves his conflicting ideas in water-tight compartments. It was also the method of Kant, and of a host of followers during the 19th century. It is still the method of those philosophies which set the realm of science off from another transcendental realm, and insist that religion possesses a special organ of truth inaccessible to science.

The other and harder method is to attempt a basic reconstruction of both bodies of belief so that they will fit harmoniously into a single system. Though it is harder, it is ultimately attempted; for the mind of man refuses to live permanently with two discordant bodies of truth. This was the method of Hegel, and of most of the theological reinterpretations of the 19th century. Its adoption meant that both the religious tradition and science itself would have to be drastically criticized. Such a complete reconstruction has been finally carried out in present-day philosophies; it has led far beyond both the narrow dogmas of 19th century physics and the apologetic tenets of idealism. It has developed into the enlarged philosophic naturalism of the 20th century.

Both of these types of idealistic compromise could accept science with its methods and assumptions; but they accepted it as mere appearance, as the description of a phenomenal realm that was but a faint

shadow of the real world. That real world, that transcendental realm, was accessible only by employing a special philosophic method that went beyond science; God was still there, a witness recording and preserving man's aspirations and struggles. Philosophy thus became identified with a way to preserve God, freedom, and immortality in the absence of any positive scientific evidence; it was committed to a religious and supernaturalistic interpretation of experience.

There was much quarrel among the idealists as to the precise character of the transcendental realm. They seemed never able to agree as to what the Absolute was like; and the secular-minded pointed with glee to this failure of their method. Those in whom traditional faith was strong naturally interpreted this supreme Reality in personal terms, as the familiar God of the churches. Such "personal idealism" was taught in many a theological seminary as the bulwark of the creed; it has been especially influential in America, where it forms to this day probably the major philosophy on which mildly liberal religious thinkers rely. Others, less committed to theism but still profoundly impressed by the importance of the moral life, read Reality as a society of spiritual selves of whose transcendent value we are convinced in moral experience. Still others, whose interest in idealism was not so much religious as dialectical, worked out its premises with unbiased logic. To the horror of the faithful, they revealed that within the subtle structure of philosophic ideal-

ism, so carefully built up to preserve religious faith, there was found as much, and as little, room for all types of religious belief as in the simpler world of science. For such sceptical logicians as F. H. Bradley, the Absolute was not God, it was beyond good and evil, pure being; as the mocker suggested, a sheet of pale pink paper. As a matter of fact, the idealistic position, if followed out honestly in the scientific spirit, leads directly to the naturalism of the present, and is as little friendly as is naturalism to finding a divine sanction for human values outside human experience.

Partly because religious leaders saw whither the logic of idealism itself was tending, partly because they were too overwhelmed by the increasing prestige of science to go through the motions of the idealistic dialectic, they came more and more to seek God, not outside the realm of science, but in some concept of that science itself. To such men the gospel of Evolution appealed as just the new faith needed to bring religion and science together again. There is a purpose in the world, man's ideals and struggles do matter to Nature, his aspirations will be some day fulfilled. Here in the cardinal doctrine of the new knowledge was a thoroughly scientific substitute for the Christian providence. No wonder that while some called it evolution, others called it God. Why were the traditionalists so blind as not to see? God was the force indwelling evolution, guiding and directing it through long ages till at last his masterpiece, man, appeared. God was the undy-

ing fire in the hearts of men, lifting them out of savagery and barbarism to ever higher ideals of freedom and right.

The fact is, that idealism had so entangled the religious life with the acceptance of the religious world-view, that these men had to deify some natural force if they were to live. For them, the whole possibility of the Good Life and an enduring faith depended on finding human standards guaranteed by the world-process itself. These new evolutionary philosophies of the 19th century were trying as desperately as the older idealisms to satisfy a religious need, to interpret experience in religious terms. And how they murdered evolution to do it! They made of it a new theology; they saw in it the final explanation of all difficulties. For them it was no mere scientific theory; it was a new religious faith, another of those Romantic faiths that read the world in human terms.

Throughout the 19th century the idea of evolution remained primarily a Romantic, not a scientific concept. It had come from Romanticists like Herder, Goethe, Schelling, and Hegel; it was forced on biology after it had long been dominant in philosophy; and it was accepted by the evolutionary philosophers not as a biological theory but as another Romantic faith about the universe, as the greatest and most seductive of the Romantic faiths. This is obvious of a man like Bergson or John Fiske; it is just as true of Herbert Spencer himself. Such faiths sprang from the old religious fervor, they emphasized the

core of the religious view of the world, that man's life receives a cosmic sanction; and yet they freely used the new language of science. No wonder they grew popular among those resolved to cleave to both religion and science.

These 19th century philosophies were inevitable in a transitional age. So long as men insisted on combining a religious world-view with the new science, they played an essential part. They hastened the open-minded acceptance of the scientific spirit; they prevented the reckless discarding of much that is precious. In an age of scientific dogmatism they rightly insisted on facts and elements of experience for which that science had no place. They enabled troubled church-members to combine the two loyalties struggling in their minds. They made it possible for Christianity to begin once more its readaptation to modern beliefs. They are still a comfort in intellectual distress to multitudes who are today repeating in their own experience what took place for others two generations ago.

Yet this time the compromise was not destined to endure. It was not thorough-going enough in its criticism either of science or the religious tradition. It was too ready to admit that science was inevitably limited in method and scope, that men must escape by other pathways to another realm. The course of philosophical development for a generation has been to enlarge and humanize the world and the methods of science, until today it is no longer necessary to resort to another avenue for describing the structure

of our universe. At the same time it has naturalized the spiritual realm, bringing it out of its kingdom apart and locating it squarely in human nature in its natural setting in the physical world.

The result is that for those thinkers really abreast of present-day science and philosophy, both the idealistic and the evolutionary compromise faiths belong to the past. Such men have never had to recover a lost faith in another form; they have grown up accepting the world of science as a matter of course. They find themselves in a richly varied universe that does not make great stretches of human experience unintelligible. They have never had a motive to flee from a narrow science to another transcendental realm; their science is broad enough to make room for the human spirit. They have never had to fling themselves passionately into the one great process left, to make its ends their own. This world of the new 20th century science is one in which they can feel emotionally at home; it has sufficient scope for all their energies and interests. It is a dwelling-place in which purposes and faiths are real, though human, where men can work with the rich materials at hand. Neither rejecting nor fleeing, nor deifying, they feel free to criticize and select, to live and reconstruct their religious life, secure that such living and reconstruction is as natural as any other process of experience.

Contemporary philosophy has resolved to take seriously the inquiring, testing, critical spirit in which scientific thinking is carried on, and to make it cen-

tral in a genuinely scientific interpretation of experience. It claims to have no unique access to final truth unknown to science. For it truth is a collection of truths. These truths, so far as their relevance to fact goes, are discovered by the best available methods of inquiry and verified by the most rigorous tests. Such methods and such tests are what is meant by science itself. To them, and to them alone, men must refer when it comes to establishing the existence of anything, and its modes of operation. To them men must go to seek the generative conditions of whatever they value most highly, and the consequences to which they give rise.

Such philosophy welcomes the insight that anthropology and psychology have gained into the nature of the religious life. It cherishes religion as one of the noblest manifestations of human nature, and sees in that level of human activity called spiritual the seat of many of man's highest values. It insists on the importance of religious faith in human life. But for it there is no realm in which man's faith is rooted other than the complex texture of living itself. For it, there is no further question of justifying a faith in the religious character of the universe, or of finding a new cosmic faith that can be so justified. All faith to it must be human faith; and it looks upon traditional Christianity and Judaism as just such human faiths, misunderstood as conveying information about the ordering of the universe.

It is in the light of this working out of the philosophical attempt to bring together two independent

bodies of belief, that the intellectual compromise of liberal religion must be viewed. Theologians and religious leaders set to work valiantly to undertake once more their historic function of reinterpreting religious beliefs in terms of the new philosophies. For the most part, they relied on some version of Romantic idealism; they became the chief supporters of idealism in Protestant lands. They were able to welcome evolutionary science in the struggles that gathered about Darwin, and to reclothe their systems in an imposing scientific terminology. Their own philosophy was based on an evolutionary monistic attitude; and the evolutionary faith they found in Darwin was itself a new version of Romantic idealism. So well, indeed, did they find their compromise suited them that liberal religion has thought largely in such terms to the present day.

The German idealists began the movement of theological reinterpretation; the outstanding names of Schleiermacher, Hegel, and Ritschl have already been mentioned. Their ideas were carried to England and America in diluted form, and given wide popularity by Coleridge, Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, and Emerson. Many more thinkers applied themselves definitely to religious reconstruction. In England Thomas Arnold, F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, and others in the Broad Church Movement; Francis W. Newman, John Seeley, and other exponents of divine immanence; Kantian agnostics like Dean Mansel, and absolute idealists like T. H. Green, Benjamin Jowett, the Cairds, Edward and

John,—all drew on the Germans for ideas. These English ventures were desultory and fragmentary, largely echoes of their German sources. The same can be said for the American attempts. The New England Unitarians introduced transcendentalism to America, and Emerson and Theodore Parker made valiant attempts to acclimate it. But outside of the Unitarian community, religious liberalism, the desire for mediation and conciliation, was felt much later in America than in Europe. Horace Bushnell was indeed writing and preaching in the fifties; but it was not until the eighties and nineties that theologians began to abandon the slow retreat before the Huxleys and Ingersolls and turned in any numbers to the compromise philosophies.

During the nineties Biblical criticism began to have a serious place in the theological seminaries, and to demand a reformulation of belief. Hebrew scholars like President Harper of Chicago University lectured on the higher criticism of the Pentateuch to overflowing audiences. John Fiske and Jacob Gould Schurman began to popularize the faith in evolution as a religious gospel. Liberal preachers like Lyman Abbott and Washington Gladden spread abroad the "New Theology," which was a monistic reinterpretation of the old creeds emphasizing the immanence of God and the potential divinity of man. Under Josiah Royce at Harvard scores of students learned how to sublimate the older Calvinism into the genteel tradition of religious idealism. Borden P. Bowne taught Methodists a vig-

orous personal idealism. Ritschlianism grew quite popular in the seminaries, and was taught by men like Henry Churchill King, G. B. Foster, and William Adams Brown. It formed an admirable transitional faith for those with fundamentally moral interests, and fitted in easily with the crude religious pragmatism of William James.

Out of this mixture of ideas arose a somewhat amorphous body of "liberal theology," widely taught and still more widely preached. It involved the definite abandonment of many elements of the older tradition: external and absolute authority, the literal inspiration of the Scriptures, a particular Providence, miracles, petitionary prayer, total depravity, eternal punishment, miraculous salvation and the vicarious atonement. Yet at the same time it proclaimed a renewed faith in the enduring verities of the religious life. It sought to reinterpret "in modern terms"— that is, in terms of the Romantic philosophies of the 19th century—the concepts and doctrines of historic Christianity. Retaining the old words and phraseology, it sought to penetrate behind these intellectual symbols to the living experiences for which they stood, and to fit them into the idealistic or evolutionary faiths.

Like all the Romantic idealisms, these liberal theologies started with a frankly humanistic approach, with human experience. They found in man at his highest the truest revelation of God. They were all monistic, emphasizing the oneness of God

and man, and the indwelling presence of God in Nature. They therefore looked askance at the Platonic dualism in terms of which traditional Christian theology had been formulated in the early days. God is above all immanent in Man and Nature; the old distinction between Natural and Supernatural has no further meaning. The order of Nature, above all the whole process of creative evolution striving upward to man, is the expression, nay, the very presence of God himself. Every event is divine; the true miracle is the working of majestic law. All noble words and spiritual insights are revelations of the divine nature. Man is not corrupt and fallen, but made in God's image, potentially divine. His natural life lived at its best is inherently worthy and good. God is in human nature, not external to it; man needs no mystical or sacramental grace to be born anew, but simply the earnest determination to recognize his divine sonship and live as a child of God should. Jesus Christ is divine, as all men are, but in no miraculous sense; his unique leadership and divinity rest on his complete consciousness of his expression of God. The Virgin birth was a poetical but crude attempt to express this unique awareness of divinity, in terms of substance and origin rather than in terms of the awakened divinity of his life and teachings. Divinity is to be judged, not by its origins, but by its fruits; it is a value pertaining to certain activities.

Such a faith involves more than a mere transla-

tion of old concepts into a new philosophical language; it stands for a fundamental shift in values. The moral impulses and the intellectual urges of the natural man are for it not things to be distrusted and transformed; they are worthy of confidence and reliance. Man needs, therefore, no supernatural transformation, no mysterious salvation; he needs only to perfect the powers already resident in him. This was a sharp break indeed with evangelical orthodoxy, which had reëmphasized the Pauline and Augustinian experience of man's weakness and inability to perceive by his own unaided efforts the highest, or to follow it when seen. It sprang from an acceptance of the optimistic, self-confident hopes of the 19th century, the emphasis on the dignity and worth of human personality. But though it was a sharp break with the immediate background, it was no new attitude in Christian history. Such humanistic confidence in man has, in fact, come to the fore again and again in the past as men rebelled at the more pessimistic views of the despisers of life. It fills the 13th century scholastics; it flourished at the Renaissance; it triumphed in the 18th century; and it was made central in the liberal Romantic faiths. Such trust in the divinity of man and nature could even rely for its authority against Paul and Augustine on the Greek Fathers of the Church who first elaborated Christian theology. And the liberals claimed, with much plausibility, that this was the attitude of Jesus himself. It was certainly an attitude fostered by the Victorian faith in material progress,

sustained by the ever-increasing power industry was giving men.

This new faith of the liberals must still awaken the sympathies of every generous mind. It enabled men to adjust their religious feelings to their new experience of exuberant hope. It helped them retain familiar ideas and beliefs, and at the same time welcome the discoveries of science. It gave them a well-rounded philosophical system in which a religious interpretation of the world seemed reconciled with a faith in science. It made it possible to believe in both God and knowledge. It was the intellectual salvation of men just awakening to the new scientific world. It was an earnest effort to fit the new scientific concepts into the framework of the traditional moral idealism of Christianity. So successful was it in combining the values of 19th century science and religion that it has endured without much change as the intellectual background of liberal religion to the present day.

But in the very nature of the case no venture at modernism, no attempt to mediate between old beliefs and new knowledge, can rest on its laurels. Such mediation must be an ever-continuing process, just so long as there is growth in thought and insight. Old syntheses crystallize and block further assimilation; old liberalisms, like that of Thomas, become present orthodoxies. The compromise of liberal religious thought in the 19th century has not escaped the universal fate of all such compromises. Our science, our philosophies, our social experience,

are not what they were a generation ago. The reconstruction of religious beliefs that served our fathers will not serve their sons.

In the light of the present situation, we can see that the 19th century philosophies and liberal theologies made no real adjustment to the spirit of science. They were rebelling, with the idealistic thinkers of the Romantic era, against the narrowness and dogmatism of Newtonian science; they naturally sought further truth in another realm by another method. Even when they welcomed evolution, they never saw the real implications of its insistence on man's biological setting in a natural environment; they made of it another Romantic faith, with no comprehension of what it ultimately meant. They never really absorbed the spirit of science.

This whole intellectual attitude and apparatus of liberal religious thinking, still dominant, with few exceptions, in modernist circles, is irrelevant today. It is irrelevant intellectually, because contemporary philosophical thinking has passed beyond idealism, has passed beyond creative evolution, has passed beyond the will to believe. Thinkers today are no longer escaping from Newtonian science; they have transformed the harsh mechanism of the 19th century into a scientific world that has a place for all the levels of human experience, and concepts for dealing with them intellectually. Philosophers are today exploring the implications of man's biological experience, of the new physics, of the new sciences of man. The present generation has seen new philos-

ophies that base themselves frankly on an acceptance of the scientific spirit and method, supersede the older idealisms and evolutionary faiths. For the most part, liberal religious leaders are still offering to men whose intellectual techniques have thus changed, a religious attitude and a philosophical interpretation of the religious life a hundred years out of date.

This attitude is still suspicious of science. It endeavors to limit its scope, to set bounds to the realm where its methods will apply. There must be truths beyond science, approaches to reality that will discover, not only values and meanings, but facts and descriptions, where scientific verification is impotent. Liberals have pared away their faith in a supernatural governance of the world until less and less is left; like the young woman who produced a baby with no apparent father, they apologize that it is after all a very little baby. They are still afraid to accept the modern scientific philosophies that frankly acknowledge the implications of biology, psychology, anthropology, and physics, that above all welcome the tentative and investigating spirit of scientific thinking. Philosophers have worked out a naturalistic interpretation of experience that gives full scope to all the verifiable needs of the moral and spiritual life. Religious leaders are still ignorant of what has been accomplished, or are afraid to follow.

Moreover, the moral optimism of religious liberalism, its individualism, its reliance on the divinity of man and nature, is a weak weapon with which

to face the ethical demands of modern society. It insists on the comfortable reality of God and Heaven, but it shrinks from the harder facts of the Devil and Hell. It is apt to assume complacently that all is right with the world, and to gloss over the disagreeable call to make it better. It lends itself far more easily to the smug middle-class worship of prosperity than to the vital religious impulses at the basis of our humanitarian and social faiths.

The optimism of the days before 1914 is dead. On the whole, men have been drawing away from insistence on the divinity of human nature, and approaching once more the less rosy attitude of Paul and Augustine and the evangelicals. Man's weakness, his impotence before the great forces, natural and human, that elude his control, have been rather more in evidence in our recent experience. Pessimism and cynicism fill our literature; they seem more realistic and hard-headed than sentimental faith in automatic progress. Men can understand again the insistence on original sin. It is becoming less difficult to hold ourselves responsible for the faults of others. The individualist revolts; but our experience does not foster individualistic thinking. Recent psychology, too, has brought to light dark inner conflicts that are apparently normal. The divinity of man and the immanence of God seem irrelevant. The tendencies toward pantheism, toward obliterating moral distinctions, that filled the thought of religious liberals, seem really dangerous. We are much more apt to think in terms of an ethical dualism between

the bitter actuality and the ideal. Both intellectually and morally we have passed beyond 19th century compromises.

If the philosophy in terms of which religious liberalism has mediated between older beliefs and the scientific faith is no longer in harmony with present-day thinking, in their practical attitudes the liberal churches have compromised only too well. In our cities organized religion has sought social as well as intellectual good form. To preach against science is for the educated classes hardly in taste. To criticize present social mores is just as questionable. The fashionable and wealthy congregation on the Avenue wants its religion "harmonized" with science; it wants it even more to come to terms with the social order. Leading modernist preachers are as often as not in charge of flocks where the Republican party is more sacred than the divinity of Jesus. As much exegetical skill is expended to reinterpret the pacifism of Jesus and the Prophets' scorn of wealth, as to explain away the accounts of creation. Adaptation to the forces of present-day life has generally meant the abandonment of the long Jewish and Christian protest against the world. If fundamentalist divines thunder against the moral disintegration of the younger generation, modernist pastors fall over themselves to champion the relaxing of sex standards, and proudly boast of their liberalism on sex and divorce. This is in some cases a thoughtful realization that our standards must be reconstructed; too often it is only a dislike of unpopular

viewpoints, tempered by no sense of the need for finding a clearer path. It is rare indeed that liberal preachers do more than acquiesce in our changing morals, and still rarer that they try to bring the moral insight of the past to bear on the conscious working out of higher standards to meet the deepened ethical needs of today.

The great majority of religious liberals drift with the current, so far as social and ethical ideals are concerned. They do not try to uphold the straighter standards of past days to which more sensitive critics of our mores often appeal. A large minority, to be sure, especially in the pulpit, are socially as well as religiously liberal; they share some one of the humanitarian faiths that mitigate our complacency. They see the evils of nationalism and imperialism; they are willing to further peace, till war is imminent. They are socially progressive, and favor a larger measure of political control of industrial forces. They may even gaze benevolently upon organized labor. A much smaller group of religious leaders is passionately devoted to more radical social programs. Such men find it hard to retain their pulpits; but most cities have at least one church that is consciously and fairly successfully appealing to the socialist group.

Whether its attitudes are conservative or radical, however, liberal religion has contributed little of original and distinctive value to the needs of industrial society. It has overwhelmingly acquiesced in the prevalent secular social ideals, with little inde-

pendent criticism of its chosen policies. The men who have used their position as religious leaders to gain new and fresh insight into the spiritual needs of modern society, can be counted on the fingers of one hand. To bring religious idealism to the service of some high-minded social faith is surely a laudable matter; but if religious experience merely lends support, if it contributes nothing of distinctive value, no special perception of spiritual needs, it is surely abandoning its ancient function. Such a state of affairs can mean only that the religious life of today has outgrown its traditional forms, and can find no further inspiration in the organized institutions.

Judged, therefore, in the light of present intellectual and social needs, it can hardly be said that the mediating compromise of liberal religion in recent times has been as successful as the great historic reconstructions of the past. Most modernist leaders are still thinking in terms that are irrelevant to the serious thought of today; they are merely acquiescing in the passing social and moral ideals of the day, with little attempt at illuminating criticism. It is apparent to the sympathetic observer that such religious thought and life is still serving well those who have in their own lives broken from rigid orthodoxy. But it is equally apparent that present-day modernism must undergo great transformations before it can hope to satisfy the religious needs of our civilization.

Chapter VI

THE STRENGTH OF ORTHODOXY

In contrast to the religious currents that have begun the long slow process of readaptation to our changed life, stand the great historic faiths that have fought to resist all compromise. Easily foremost is the entrenched organized power of the Catholic Church. After some little dabbling with Romanticism, the main body of Western Christians set its face resolutely against all temporizing with the passing philosophies of the age. It grounded itself firmly on the Council of Trent and the wisdom of Thomas, and bade defiance to the modern world. It has in consequence prospered greatly, and seems likely in the near future to gain still further in devotion and power.

In thus frankly building upon the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church possessed several inestimable advantages. It retreated to an extraordinarily rich and complete intellectual life. The far-flung thought of Thomas, interpreting and supplementing the complex human wisdom of Augustine with the precision and clarity of Aristotelian science, is a world in which most intellects can rest with satisfaction. Only the sceptical, doubting, inquiring spirit of experimental science finds no welcome. And unless one

is willing to follow that spirit to the bitter end, whithersoever it may lead, surely this synthesis of Greek and Christian wisdom is the best that our tradition has to offer. Compared with it, all the successive philosophies that men have worked out since to help them merge new truth with old faith are mere ephemeral things of a day, a single age, that have already become for us objects of mere historical interest. Philosophically, the Thomistic synthesis is far superior to the fragmentary, inconsistent, self-contradictory views of modern scientists and philosophers. Thomas and his fellows showed an ability at reasoning, at perceiving the exact consequences of ideas, that only a few mathematicians today possess. There is therefore in their theories much less of the muddle and confusion, the failure to think things through, so characteristic of the thought dominated by natural science. Having a meager body of data, they spent their time in drawing out the implications of what they had. We are swamped by facts; we are trained in observing and reading rather than in reasoning. Hence Thomas was able to build a sounder philosophy than any of the modern period,—a philosophy, that is, that makes a more consistent and satisfactory structure out of its materials. Its materials were much more limited than those that later thinkers have had to organize, and the task was perhaps easier; but the fact remains that Thomism is still a living philosophy, while the succeeding systems of the modern period are already historical relics.

Nor is this Catholic synthesis irrelevant to modern intellectual interests. The biological thought of the 19th century, and the present reconstruction of the foundations of physics, have brought contemporary science and philosophy closer to the basic concepts of Aristotelianism than to the narrowly mechanical ideas of the last two hundred years. There has been a marked reaction of late years to the core of the scholastic tradition; it seems likely that the philosophy of Thomas can assimilate these new elements rather better than the philosophies of our more immediate past.

The Church, moreover, while maintaining that certain dogmas, as defined in the Tridentine Confession of Faith, are divinely revealed and authoritatively imposed on all believers, has never insisted with orthodox Protestants on a literal interpretation of the Scriptures. It has preserved the ancient methods of allegorical and symbolic interpretation; and Catholics have therefore not found themselves irrevocably opposed to specific scientific discoveries. They have been much freer than orthodox Protestants to accept the historical criticism of the Scriptures; and they have not been committed to a literal belief in the creation accounts of Genesis. On only one score does Catholic dogma specifically oppose biological ideas; it insists that at a certain point in the evolutionary process the body of man was informed with an immortal soul. Such a conviction is obviously irrelevant to experimental investigation. Catholics have therefore been fairly free to accept

the verified conclusions of science; they have the authority of Thomas for maintaining that between true science and true religion there can never be a conflict, since both spring from God. Many devout Catholic scientists have like Pasteur and Mendel been pioneer investigators.

In the second place, the Catholic Church never succumbed quite so completely as the Protestants to the individualism of the modern age. It remained a great collective institution, still claiming the power of religious control over men's lives. During the heydey of competitive individualism, this was a great liability; but now that personal liberty is giving way to socialized control, the Church is reaping the benefits of her steadfast adherence to medieval social ideals. In the Age of Faith the Church undertook to organize an entire society on a religious basis; and the machinery of ideal and structure is still there. Though the hierarchy has shown no undue haste to meet the problems of industrialism, there have been noble Catholic leaders, with strong followings in every European land, who have undertaken to reëstablish a modified form of medieval collectivism; and from time to time the Pope has given them his benediction. The Church remains, moreover, the one great social institution that has been broader than national boundaries; and although its political policies have often set state against state, it has usually opposed a narrow patriotism. This too has brought it again and again into bitter conflict with the secular state; but it has also won the allegiance of many

who realize how little nationalism suits the needs of modern life.

It has not been its profound philosophy, however, nor any social program it has yet actively fostered, that has been the main strength of the Church in recent years. The Church has kept its hold primarily because it has insisted on its absolute authority, because it has stood like the Rock of Ages against all compromise. It has been the bulwark of the multitudes who deeply need such authority; and their number is increasing.

While able to accept with little difficulty much of 19th century science, the Church not only maintained its divinely appointed authority in whatever it judged touched faith and morals; it undertook a strengthening and a precise definition of those powers. It was the pontificate of Pius IX that brought the matter to a head. Pius promulgated two new dogmas, the first since the Council of Trent. In 1854 he proclaimed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin. Ten years later he issued the Syllabus of Errors, in which he explicitly condemned almost all the philosophical and social tendencies of the age. Finally, in 1870, an œcumenical council proclaimed the dogma of Papal Infallibility.

This was the irrevocable commitment of the Church against liberal tendencies. Its value has been more symbolic than practical. The doctrine was not new, having been widely held since the Middle Ages; but it had never before been made binding. It is the logical outcome of the actual monarchy of the Pope

taken in conjunction with the ancient dogma of the infallibility of the Church. And it is carefully guarded; it is not claimed that the Pope's opinions are infallible, or that he is sinless. Infallibility is limited to matters of faith and morals, and applies only to decrees addressed to the Church at large and intended to be binding. Such decrees alone are absolutely final, irrevocable, and irreformable.

As a matter of fact, Catholic scholars regard only two pronouncements in the history of the Papacy as infallible, that on the Immaculate Conception and the Syllabus of Errors; and there is much doubt about the latter. The careful definition of infallibility has made many doctrines less binding than before; no succeeding Pope has been willing to exercise so tremendous a responsibility. It is as a moral symbol of the Church's impregnability that the dogma has been chiefly significant.

The defiance of all compromise has not been easy. There grew up under the more tolerant Leo XIII a Modernist movement among the younger priesthood, that reflected the Romantic modernism of the Protestants even while it insisted on the social sense and the solidarity of the Church. This movement was officially stamped out by Pius X in 1907; the Modernists had asked for more liberty within the Church, and the Church was not prepared to sacrifice its basic principle of absolute authority. Since that time whatever compromising tendencies have existed have been carefully hidden.

As compared with this strong appeal to the au-

thority of tradition, Protestant orthodoxy has been weak and divided, expending itself in petulant and unsuccessful gestures against the new world. Protestantism does not possess the three great roots of strength that are at the basis of the Church's power. The intellectual world it offers to its adherents is pitifully thin and meager compared with the wealth of scholastic thought. The great Reformers of the 16th century rejected the Greek wisdom that had been embodied in the Middle Ages, and returned to Augustine for their philosophy. The leaders of the evangelical revival found even Augustine and his reformulation in Lutheran and Calvinistic theology too intellectual for them; they returned to the "Bible Christianity" of Paul. They forsook, that is, all the philosophy and much of the human wisdom that had for centuries accumulated about the mystical doctrine of salvation. Such Protestants must turn to the purely secular thought of the modern world once their intellectual curiosity is awakened; they have no independent tradition of religious learning to satisfy their minds. In the world of Calvinistic theology subtle and acute minds could thrive; now that those ideas have been given over to the antiquarian, intelligent Protestants have no choice but to enter on assimilation and compromise. Evangelical orthodoxy thrives on ignorance and is undermined by education; Catholic orthodoxy is based on conviction, and has an imposing educational system of its own. In the vigorous intellectual revival of the Neo-Thomists, flourishing so widely in modern Catholicism, there is

plenty of room for the learned doctor and the profound and penetrating thinker. Protestant orthodoxy can offer nothing to match it.

Nor has Protestantism the collective social faith, the elaborate functional ideals of the Middle Ages, with which to face industrialism. The Puritans abandoned all attempt at a religious ordering of society; the evangelicals concentrated on an exceedingly individual religious experience and a narrowly personal moral code. Their very conception of sin is not, like that of the Catholics, a social concept; it is a peculiarly private and inner matter. Even when it impels them to crusade against social evils, it is directed primarily against infringements of an individualistic code. The campaign against strong liquor has been carried on, not as a way of dealing with a complex and intricate social problem, but as a simple matter of personal morality. The intense support of Prohibition given by evangelical orthodoxy has only confused a delicate process of far-reaching social readjustment.

Most important of all, Protestant orthodoxy has no institutional authority on which it can rely. It has found its authority in the Scriptures and in creeds, not in a living Church that can grow and reinterpret. This has led in the past to the two hundred warring sects whose very existence makes claims to authority ridiculous. It has set the orthodox against all attempts at a historical criticism and understanding of the Bible; it has made them oppose many specific bits of scientific knowledge that conflicted with the

letter of Holy Writ. Having no living tradition in which to rest, Protestants have rightly seen that any abrogation of the literal inerrancy of the Scriptures would mean the slippery descent into modernism and compromise. On the other hand, they have had no such defence as the Catholics against the crudest acceptance of passing mores and standards.

For these reasons, the thoughtful and intelligent elements in Protestantism have been found overwhelmingly on the side of assimilation and mediation. For several generations the theological seminaries, devoted to the training of ministers and leaders, have welcomed all the forces making for religious liberalism. The great mass of Protestants, however, especially in those regions and classes where science means only its practical fruits, have had no opportunity to learn of the intellectual currents of the modern world. The process of reëducation, carried on in countless pulpits, has been slow and difficult. The ministers themselves have been all too often abysmally ignorant; the better educated among them have been either too afraid to antagonize their congregations, or too lacking in appreciation of the emotional roots of the familiar faith. They have either been content to keep their own reinterpretations to themselves, or else have courted notoriety by shocking their hearers instead of tactfully guiding them to their own position.

The situation has thus been favorable for a last stand against the insidious attraction of the modern world. From a mixture of motives, certain groups of

ministers have in recent years attempted to counteract the rapid drift to modernism. Some of them have been professionally jealous of the liberals who have enjoyed the advantages of a modern education in the theological seminaries. Some of them have found the vociferous insistence on orthodoxy a ready means to bolster up their waning influence in the community. Some of them genuinely fear that religious liberalism involves not only intellectual confusion and insincerity, but also the definite abandonment of the core of the evangelical faith, the depravity of human nature, the need of supernatural grace for salvation, and the attendant faith in the literal miracle of the incarnation. All of them have little understanding or interest in present-day philosophies, and are quite incapable of comprehending the thought of men who accept them.

This recent Fundamentalist offensive began shortly before 1914 as a clerical, not a lay movement. Its roots lie largely in the average man's ignorance of modern thought. It was powerfully stimulated by the reactionary bitterness of the post-war return to normalcy, and by the fear of economic conservatives of the socialized religion which liberal leaders were putting in the place of the gospel of Christ crucified. It profited also by the reaction against the looseness and vagueness of the liberals; it was not at sea, it offered definite belief without suspicion of hypocrisy.

This reaction to orthodoxy has not been successful. In no church have the Fundamentalists been able to drive out the liberals, or even muster a majority.

At present there is a truce that means the liberals are free to continue their assimilation and reinterpretation within the historic organizations. The high-water mark of the Fundamentalists has been gained in the statutes that in several states have prohibited the teaching of evolution. The only effect has been to foster a hypocritical and rather muddled attitude in men of science, who refuse to admit the direction in which scientific thinking is tending. It needs little knowledge of present-day thought to realize that evolution is the easiest concept to reconcile with religion, and that today the real threat to orthodoxy lies in far different fields.

It seems doubtful whether a religious movement that can appeal only to ignorance can remain long compatible with modern education. Quite rightly the Fundamentalists have found in education the real point of conflict. It is modern thought that is weaning men to liberalism. But the Fundamentalists, unlike the Catholics, have made no effort to set up an alternative educational system of their own; they have, indeed, none to offer. They can only protest feebly at a single doctrine or two. Modern thought is not taught only in the schools. It is crowding in upon men from every avenue of living; and no childish statute can keep it out.

Jewish orthodoxy is at an even greater disadvantage than Protestant. It rests on the practice of a detailed body of ritual and ceremonial observances, developed to organize the social and personal life of a Jewish community living in isolation apart from

Gentiles. When Jews left the Ghetto to mingle with Christians, the social observances of the Jewish community were doomed. They have been kept alive in America only by new arrivals from Eastern Europe; with the cutting down of immigration, Jews themselves look forward to their early disappearance. The Jewish attempt at modernism, the Reform movement in Germany and America, has left a liberal theism exposed to all the forces that have remade Protestantism. In philosophy, in theological reinterpretations, in ethical ideas, Reformed Judaism has shown little intellectual independence; there is only a sentimental piety to the past to distinguish it. The lore of the rabbis and the Talmud has for ages afforded orthodox Jews as complete and well-rounded an intellectual world as Catholics possess; but it is a world still more alien to modern life. This long study of the Law has endowed contemporary Jewry with a fine respect for a trained and scholarly ministry; but the object of their thought today is the intellectual life of Western civilization, not the Torah. The zeal of the Prophets still lives in the devotion of Jews to our humanitarian and social faiths.

The greatest cause of the persistence of religious orthodoxy in all its forms is undoubtedly the sheer force of custom. Religious attitudes, moral ideals, and theological beliefs are the deepest and most ingrained parts of any culture; around them there gathers all the profound emotional appeal of the past, all the sentimental attachment to what has

been learned in early childhood, all the natural piety and reverence toward the great leaders of times gone by. Organized religious institutions are notoriously the nuclei which attract every form of social, moral, and intellectual conservatism. Emotional continuity with the past, especially in times of obvious transition, is something ardently sought and deeply felt. Amidst so much that is novel and bewildering, it is good to hear the familiar music, to go through the dear old forms, to have one place at least where the mind can retreat from problems of readjustment. Religious traditionalism rests primarily on the great body of men who have simply not felt the forces of the new civilization, or, having vaguely touched them, shrink back into the accustomed ways and lore.

There is more than mere inertia, however, in the hold of orthodoxy today. Traditional Christianity embraces a religious life and a variety of religious experiences far richer than the elements which liberalism has singled out for enthusiastic emphasis. In turning to social faiths, in concentrating upon the furtherance of the Good Life through human intelligence and techniques, religious liberals and radicals have abandoned many springs of religious feeling that have been central in the past. It may well be that the objects to which they attach their emotions will come increasingly to dominate the religious life of an industrial civilization. But it is doubtful whether the older experiences will so easily lose their significance. They are deeply grounded in our cul-

ture; they fill our literature, they have moulded our art, they have come to color all our forms of thought and social organization. It may be that were we facing the social experience of an industrial society afresh, with no heritage from the past, they would not naturally assume vital import. But human civilizations can never cut loose from their roots; amid all their transformations they cannot forget what their fathers deeply felt. Moreover, for all our optimistic confidence in human powers, there remain certain inescapable experiences to which some emotional adjustment must be made. And though technology has in many cases substituted intelligent control for resignation, it has itself brought new forces to which the only attitude must be acquiescence.

Sickness, sorrow for the departed, and sin, still cast their shadows over men's lives. Men still waste away in lingering illness that medical skill can not prevent. The time comes when all must die. Men still fall short of what they recognize to be highest; and our complicated network of human relationships has only multiplied the ways in which our own inadequacies and failings wound the lives and spirits of others. Historic Christianity has provided the means whereby generation after generation of men have in their personal lives been able to meet these tragic experiences and find spiritual deliverance. It has offered a rich consolation for the inevitable times of defeat, when men must somehow adjust themselves emotionally to failure, and renew their energies for further struggle. It has bestowed a

religious balm for wounded souls, a generous sympathy for the pains of living, a courage to endure, and an inspiration to fight and strive once more. It matters not that the consolations offered have taken mythical form, and the hopes fostered have been illusory. It has recognized these spiritual needs, and enabled men to meet them nobly. For such problems of the personal religious life, our modern faiths have only dumb Stoic resignation. And until they come to offer more adequate spiritual guidance, there will be multitudes to find in traditional religion the wisdom they crave.

A spiritual ideal, the ability to rise above mere grasping for material goods, even if it be to alleviate the poverty of others, an end for living that shall be attainable even without outward success,—in the Christian past men found such a goal in loving and serving God. Such spirituality may have often spurned the material means by which failure could have been avoided. But it did provide an incentive for striving on to victory against insuperable odds; and it held forth a victory that did not turn to dust and ashes in the hand. If offered a goal so high that no man could sink into the complacency of attainment; yet it avoided despair by proclaiming that he who strove would not be lost. It counseled healing the sick and feeding the needy; but it kept the end of human living beyond such easy winning. Men still feel the need of such a transcendent ideal to serve; they demand more than the abolition of poverty, the spread of prosperity, the establishment of universal

peace. Dimly enough they see in historic Christianity something higher than what is offered by purely humanitarian faiths.

Orthodoxy has, moreover, an intellectual power that liberalism has so far lacked. In the face of the uncertainty and confusion, the muddled thinking and mingling of contradictory ideas, that so abound in modernist circles, its theological tenets stand out with clarity and precision. In accepting them there is no vague hoping to eat one's cake and still have it. The orthodox know just where they stand. Particularly is this true of the refined and elaborate thought of Catholic philosophy. The Church has never countenanced what it calls fideism, reliance on sentiment and emotion alone. It has recognized that a great body of men can be united only by a faith that is clear-cut and objective. It has always stood for rationalism, and today its rationalistic philosophy has a great appeal for those disheartened by the irrationalism and voluntarism of modern thought. To be sure, it has always dictated the authoritative premises; but that in itself has much to recommend it over mere personal prejudice and bias.

So markedly does the clarity of orthodoxy contrast with the confusion and more or less unconscious hypocrisy of liberalism, that more radical minds who have broken with traditional religion completely are apt to respect the orthodox believer more highly than the muddled modernist. They do not speak his language; but they can understand what he means, and appreciate the power of the experience he expresses.

Nothing is more difficult for the outsider to sympathize with, than the attempt to combine two loyalties; nothing harder to understand than the man who remains within the church without believing, who recites the creed with mental denial.

For many who have come to understand what the spirit of science means, who have glimpsed its tentative, hypothetical, experimental pursuit of a truth that is merely provisional, the finality of orthodoxy is a welcome refuge. Such an inquiring and sceptical temper of mind is far from natural; it is the hardest thing in the world for men really to entertain. Few can live by it; scientists themselves are prone to take their theories as established truth. For those who realize that contemporary science and philosophy have abandoned all claim to final Truth, there is left a gaping void that must be filled. Such Truth must reside somewhere! Minds not strong enough to live by hypothesis flee to the most imposing authority in sight. It is no accident that sceptics like John Henry Newman or Arthur Balfour take refuge in religious authority; or that a generation of French intellectuals brought up on Renan and Anatole France should flee to the Church. As the real implications of the scientific habit of thinking grow more apparent, orthodoxy is bound to gather in the shrinking souls.

There is need in human thinking and living for something transcendent, something set off as above or beyond the realm of ordinary experience. The faith by which men are to order their lives can not

be at the mercy of change refutation by new fact or theory. A moral ideal, in the worth and sacredness of human personality, for example, must be grounded in a realm where half-understood intelligence tests can not shake it. Man must mark his fellows off from the rest of Nature, if he is to be sensitive to their spiritual needs. He must have a realm in which his struggles count; in which the value of the moment is not dependent on some ultimate success. The dualism that has run through human thinking, setting off the soul from the body, the spiritual from mere passing gratification, the ideal from the actual, Divine truth from practical wisdom, and God from Nature, is deeply rooted in man's moral and religious experience. Such dualisms, made rigid and hard and metaphysical, are unable to adjust themselves flexibly to new knowledge and new insights; they have produced their crop of pain and oppression. But they correspond to a deep need in human living; they cannot be lightly dismissed, as they often are in our naturalistic philosophies today. Historically they have been embodied in religious supernaturalism. Until this deep emotional need for something transcendent is reconciled with the practical necessity for flexibility and criticism, men will turn to the historic faiths that build upon it.

In all these ways, traditional religion protests against the liberal acceptance of the modern world and modern thought. It embodies experiences and needs which, if not so widely felt today as in the past, preserve none the less an enduring appeal. And

now that our mechanized and standardized world seems closing in about us, men are turning once more to traditional orthodoxy as the strongest bulwark against the tides of industrialism. Most powerful of all, the Catholic Church is the haven of refuge for those who shrink from an uncertain future. In Europe especially, where the old culture flourished at its richest, those whose lives are bound up with it find the Church the one great institution of the older world that promises safety from the flood. Unable to enter the new world, many of the intellectual classes, artists and writers and thinkers, have turned to Rome from the scepticism of science and the mediocrity of industrialism. Where science disintegrated the older faith, the fear of a mechanized and standardized life seems for the time being to have strengthened it. There appears little doubt that Catholicism will wax stronger in the near future as it gathers in the hesitant. For those unwilling to flee to it, the challenge is to rebuild a religion for the new world that will offer as much to the spiritual life of man.

Chapter VII

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL AND THE GOSPEL OF BEAUTY

For multitudes of men neither traditional orthodoxy nor liberal religion in its late 19th century form retains any significant and vital appeal. The historic faiths are for them too bound up with literal belief in an antiquated cosmology, with magic and supernaturalism, with the narrow authority of a bigoted and crystallized institution. The modernistic reconstructions are too obviously outgrown compromises, too sentimental an expression of mere emotional piety, too content to drift with the currents of living and the winds of doctrine. Both alike seem inescapably rooted in a past experience that has lost its relevance to contemporary life.

Great numbers have simply allowed the forms and institutions of organized religion to slip gradually from their concerns. They have no real hostility; they have no enthusiasm or need: they are merely indifferent. Some of the more educated find religious beliefs too irrelevant to bother even to revise them; many more, especially among the working-classes, have lost interest in a formalism built on experiences they do not share. There can

be little question that, as compared with the early days of the 19th century, religious indifference has been growing of recent years,—at least if one defines religious interest as a genuine concern with what transcends the narrow horizon of the routine of living and the daily round of pleasures. This indifference, we have tried to point out, has been as marked among those who still lend passive support to the churches as among those who have drifted out of membership. It is too simple, however, to read a lack of fervent attachment to organized institutions as necessarily a waning of all religious interest. The objects that waken emotional loyalties today, the real faiths that stir men's hearts, have for many outgrown the churches and left them behind with the past. When one contemplates the passionate adherence to social programs, the deep currents of nationalism, the sincere devotion to humanitarian enterprises, the quiet but genuine personal and private types of religious feeling, it is difficult to believe that our society as a whole contains less of the raw materials of the religious life than those of the past,—except, perhaps, during times of peculiarly intense emotional crises. Public opinion has become more tolerant of non-conformity; religion has in large part deserted the churches for more significant objects of attachment.

For many, secular and social faiths have replaced the old call to serve God; for many others, the same craving for consolation and assurance of personal help that lay at the basis of historic Chris-

tianity and Judaism, has led to newer and more experimental cults. There is a large group of men and women, particularly in the prosperous middle class, who have become religious tasters, hurrying from one to another of the novel religious bodies that have sprung up to satisfy the needs of the unchurched. The varied religious experiments, whose names are to be found in great profusion in the church news pages of metropolitan dailies, embrace pretty much the entire gamut of human experience. All of them have broken definitely with the historic forms of Christianity; all of them scorn the modernist attempt to reinterpret from within the church. They range from descendants of 18th century radicalism, like Unitarianism and Free Thought, through the many exotic Oriental or pseudo-Oriental cults promising the wisdom of the East, to high-minded humanitarian and agnostic movements like the Positive Religion of Humanity, the German Monists, and the Ethical Culture Societies. Some of these more radical groups, like Unitarianism, have a noble tradition of striving and adherence to high ideals. But such historic radicalisms are not growing today; they have all too often crystallized, especially in their New England home, into new social orthodoxies. Where they have not, they are kept alive mainly by those who have come out of orthodoxy and demand a freer resting-place. Some, like the Ethical Culture movement, are in their very character designed to attract only those with an especially sensitive spiritual and moral

nature; they can never hope to have a wide appeal for *l'homme moyen sensuel.* Some, like Christian Science, are survivors of the picturesque religious scene into which Protestantism disintegrated in the 19th century. Still others, like most of the cults of Eastern spirituality, are an alternative to the boredom and formality of orthodoxy, and the coldness and complacency of liberalism. These latter appeal to the desire for novelty, for thrill, for the shock that comes when old needs are satisfied in a new way. They satisfy essentially the same need for consolation and supernatural help around which Christianity was organized; but they are in comparison to it pitifully crude, woefully inadequate, and morally and intellectually puerile.

It is a great mistake to group all these religious experiments together. They are symptoms of the inadequacy of the churches; they are the inevitable gropings of those who seek a new religion with no concern for emotional continuity with the past. They range from primitive magic to highly intellectual spirituality. But they are all too sharp in their break with the old to win as yet any wide adherence from the great majority. For the present at least it seems likely that their chief function will be, for those not willing to adopt purely secular faiths, to leaven the attempts to reconstruct the main streams of the religious tradition.

For those embarked upon this latter venture, the most striking phenomenon in recent years has been the abandonment of the intellectual problems

involved in reconciling historic creeds with present-day scientific faiths. The long effort of the 19th century has wearied men; the more thoughtful realize that none of those liberal theologies and philosophies was really successful. They know that modern thinking has left such transitional compromises behind; they are bewildered by the more recent scientific philosophies. The intellectual reconciliation with science proved a failure; it pruned away belief after belief until the spiritual life was left bare and denuded. It eagerly grasped at scientific concepts that turned out when properly understood to have no religious value. Most liberals today have not definitely renounced the theistic core of traditional theology; they are far more apt to rest comfortably in the oft-repeated assertion that there can be no real conflict between religion and science, and to allow the difficult problem of explaining exactly how, to sink into the background. Nowadays it is fashionable to be impatient of all theological thinking, old orthodoxies and new reconstructions alike. It is easy to arouse enthusiasm by contrasting the vital impulses of the religious life with the bare bones of dry theology. Religion is life, not idle speculation. It is the moral teachings of Jesus that inspire men, not the curious theology that grew up about his supposed atonement. What counts is not doctrine but social action. Let men believe as they please; it makes no difference. But let them unite in terms of a certain symbolic worship, let them join to make effective the social and moral

ideals of Christianity. It is of little import what men think, so long as they practice their religion.

This abandonment of thought has the support of the scientific analyses of the nature and function of religion. They assure men that religion is an organization of man's emotional life, a consecration of feeling and action, and that intellectual content is historically and psychologically a secondary matter. Religion has nothing to do with truth; it is neither revelation nor demonstration. The important thing is not what religion says, but what it is and does. It answers deeply irrational needs of human nature with a deep irrational peace. To turn mystic insights into logical proofs, mysteries into metaphysics, and the vision of God into a formula of his being, is to labor under a singularly naïve misapprehension of what religion is.

The net result of this pushing of thought into the background has been to leave men with an uncritical acquiescence in whatever mythology they are accustomed to. For some, the full structure of traditional creeds has remained, unintelligible, perhaps, but emotionally familiar. Their genuine religious impulses have turned in other directions. For the great majority of liberals, the reconstructions accomplished in the last generation have been allowed to stand. They think, when they think at all, in terms of a vague theism, a God who is somehow in Nature and the heart of man, a comfortable faith in some continued existence after death. More radical minds are willing to acquiesce in the scien-

tific orthodoxy of the last century, so long as they do not have to bother their heads too much about it. Religious beliefs are mere fables; Christianity is a flaming mythology, a dramatic history. It does not matter. Such myths inspire and ease the heart; they serve to organize feeling and action.

There are today three main attitudes toward religion maintained by those to whom orthodoxy and indifference are impossible, three philosophies of religion. Those who view the religious life with the inquiring eye of the scientist, see in it primarily an emotional experience, a type of human activity that strives to secure an emotional adjustment to its world. They are concerned with what this experience does to man, the part it plays in his life, the consequences that flow from it. They study the religious life by means of the techniques of the psychologist; they analyse and describe what happens in its crises, how those in whom it is strong differ from those who feel it less intensely. The classic expression of this attitude is William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience.* Most of those who have been inspired by James are interested in the personal and private aspects of religion, in the exciting and curious variations to which it has given birth, in the religious genius or mystic.

Those who come to religion with the imaginative and artistic interests of the broadly cultured man see in it rather a form of poetry, a symbolic interpretation of human experience, a great imaginative structure reared to extend the narrow horizons of

actual living. Religion is for them the poetry of the race, objectified into dogma and transmitted through a church revivified from time to time by the fresh insight of those geniuses who are dubbed prophets or heretics. It can make no claim to literal truth, to any special knowledge of the processes of nature or existence in another realm; but it has a symbolic relevancy to human life, a metaphorical truth that is as the truth of all noble art. Such men, emancipated from literal-minded belief in fables and magic, are not concerned to argue for or against what religion says. They seek in the wealth of religious traditions the human sources and motives of doctrine, ritual, and organization; the aspirations they embody, the temper of life each imaginative version of experience has bestowed on its believers.

The classic expression of this attitude is to be found in the writings of Santayana. For him, religion is an imaginative achievement, a high and noble form of art, a poem shared by generation after generation. It is but natural that men who look upon religion in such terms should be struck by the beauty of the great traditions that have been slowly built by succeeding ages. Their significant ritual has raised the individual crises of life, birth, adolescence, marriage, death, the coming of new vitality in springtime and the slow decay of autumn, from their momentary meaningless to the eternal perfection of beauty. The Christian tale of the God turned man that man might see God is a humane and imaginative way of saying that mortal men, blind and impotent be-

fore nature, cannot of their own will and intelligence be saved. If salvation come, it is as an undeserved and unearned blessing. The history of religion is the history of ways of life, not in time, but in eternity. It is the artistic embodiment of ideals of a perfect world, in which man's limitations are vanished and his desires are at perfect peace.

For those who seek such artistic perfection in the imaginative realm of religion, the crude results of modern attempts to build anew cannot but seem illiberal and inhumane. These men are committed to the beauty of the past, and they cry aloud when sacrilegious hands are laid upon the bygone achievements of creative fiction, not because they think them true, but because they are so poignantly beautiful. To tear away, to discard images because, forsooth, they are false, to strip man's heritage of this wealth of symbol and metaphor because it is irrelevant to the laboratory, is the unpardonable sin. All discourse is metaphor, and no religion is literally true. Why, then, reject the rich imagery of tradition for the cold and barren poverty of liberalism?

For still a third group religion is primarily social idealism. It is the call of the prophet to make all things new, the imperious moral urge to transform the world and build a new heaven and a new earth. It is the consecration of righteousness, the high endeavor to crusade against evil and injustice. It is the flame on the tongue of the denouncer of iniquity, the lance in the hand of the valiant soldier of the

right. It calls men to forsake their scramble for material wealth and bids them push on to embody the ideals to which they give lip-service. It brings divine discontent with all present achievement; it permits of no slothful sinking back in comfort and ease. It is impatient even of the insight and vision by which men now live; it urges spiritual exercise to find new insight, higher ideals, more adequate goals. It rejects the world, not to flee from it, but to conquer it. It seeks no private escape into a ready heaven, or into a poetic revery on the art of the past. It sets forth to redeem mankind, and takes the world as the object of salvation.

Many a voice has been raised these hundred years, since Fichte hurled his fiery nature against the world to overcome it, in behalf of this prophetic zeal. The moral earnestness of Protestantism and Judaism has found in it the very core of religion, the message of the Prophets of old, the burning gospel of the Nazarene. Away with Pharisee and priest, away with the opiate of soft music and chanted words! Christ came, not to bring consolation and dumb acquiescence in the evils of life, not to preach purity of heart and the unclouded spirit. He was no mawkish sentimental teacher of humility, resignation, and longsuffering. He sought to stir men to action; he brought, not peace, but a sword. His message was not the poetic parables, but the stern command to build the Kingdom of God. Overthrow evil, conquer the world, establish a righteous social order, banish war and poverty and selfishness and

greed. The peace of religion is not the meditation upon eternity in dim cathedral or storied cloister; it is not the ineffable moment when the organ rolls out the tragic drama of the Passion. It is that divine peace that descends on the strong man as he struggles for what he knows to be right, the peace that flows into the soul of him who has found a great cause in which he can sink his whole being, the peace of those who have fought the good fight, the peace that is caught in the ecstatic moment of battle itself, the peace that passeth all understanding.

With the waning of interest in the hard work of thought, men have been left with these two faiths, the faith in social justice and the faith in beauty. It is these two tendencies that are strong and vital today in the religion that has broken with orthodoxy, and has ceased to look for miracles. It is the old contrast between the priest and the prophet, the past and the future, piety and protest, Hellenism and Hebraism, Beauty and Righteousness. Men go to church to hear the music, to commune with the saints, to find a sanctuary from life, to share the emotional experience of common worship, to adore at the altar; they go to be stirred by the preacher, to be kindled by the fire of the prophets of old, to find courage and inspiration and self-reliance to master their lives, to thrill with the clarion call to share in a great common crusade. They find in religion a consolation and refuge from the storms of life; they find an incentive and motive to social endeavor.

Both these forms of religious experience are living today, within the old churches and outside them. But it is easy to see that either taken alone is inadequate and narrow, and pursued in isolation is prone to degenerate. The social gospel is apt to exhaust itself in a vague humanitarianism that does not come to grips with present-day problems. It is apt to waste its real energies in futile "social work" and the organization of much cumbersome machinery. The ethical traditions of Christianity, particularly the moral ideals of Protestantism, are today crumbling in the face of science and industrialism. The leaders of the social gospel have, alas, little real moral guidance to offer for our pressing problems. They have turned from the traditional faith to the Gospel of Jesus; but though they have striven valiantly to reinterpret it, they have not made of it an adequate ideal for an industrial and technological world. They have tried to gain power and strength through the appeal to the authority of Jesus; but this very finality has kept them from a genuine reconstruction of moral and social standards. The ethics of Jesus may contain fundamental principles that are the best we have so far attained; but without patient thought and fresh insight they remain woefully inadequate. The apostles of social Christianity have brought their religious zeal to the service of the varied programs of social reconstruction already worked out; but secular reformers have not been greatly impressed. They are willing to welcome new allies. But after all it is not much

help to call socialism or some other humanitarian program the Kingdom of God.

Moreover, the social gospel, which pins all its hopes to practical success in controlling and remoulding human society, is apt to lack that deeper faith that rests on a more transcendent ideal. It has little with which to sustain men when such hopes beat against the stone walls of failure. It lacks the stamina to face disillusionment; it has no weapon with which to combat cynicism. In the years before 1914, and during those cataclysmic days when the optimistic could still hope for a drastically changed world to be born overnight, the social gospel was increasing in strength and prestige. In the more recent era of disenchantment many have grown discouraged and fallen by the wayside; many have gone over to the consolations of beauty. Prophets are still left, but they are crying in the midst of plenty, to those whose spiritual sensibilities have been dulled by prosperity. Their followers are grown weary of the day that comes not. Temporarily, at least, the call for a religious crusade to control our social forces is falling on deaf ears.

In this cynical generation, Beauty is the one secure rock to which the disillusioned may still cling. In it men take refuge, for the moment at least, from the destroyer science and the irresistible machine. In the calm and peace of a great tradition, in the wealth of ritual and art with which Christianity has clothed the spiritual life, many find their doubts and misgivings stilled for the hour. It is this craving for

æsthetic consolation in the pains of life that lies back of the increasing interest in ritualism and forms of worship in all our churches, even those least committed to the supernatural beliefs to express which that ritual was created. It is not only in Episcopalianism that the High Church movement is growing; there is a tendency to High Church Methodism and even Unitarianism.

In the educated classes, sensitive minds and imaginative souls are coming more and more to find religion a satisfying form of art, and to see in creeds and ritual the poetic elevation of human life to a realm of timeless beauty. Such men demand a satisfying service, the worthy production of the great religious music of the past, the masses of Bach and Beethoven. They groan when the preacher appears; they would like to abolish the pulpit, or at least reduce it to an innocuous interlude in the æsthetic experience that stirs their emotions. They do not believe; they have been taught that theology is silly. They are content to enjoy, to feel the common emotion that is shared by the auditors of a superconcert. There is surely much to be said for relieving the bare austerity of our Puritan forms of worship; but can this alone ever express a living religion?

This æsthetic gospel cannot help but be backward-looking and conservative, indifferent to the needs of present experience for a new language in which to express itself, even though the tongue be for a time halting and crude. It is apt to be a parasitic embroidery upon the harsh realities of life,

passive and acquiescent in past achievement, irrelevant to the moral demands of today. There is about the wealthy church in which such artistic masterpieces can alone be produced, an ethical callousness and insensitivity that is not relieved by millions given for charity. This is a religion of escape, not the living faith that built the great cathedrals and produced the great religious art. It appeals to those who find it easier to flee from the problems of present-day living than to face them thoughtfully and courageously. It has abandoned the honest attempt to think clearly about human destiny; it is quite content to acquiesce in the superstition of those who take these things as though they were meant to be true. It is in just such a worship of the artistic perfection of the immemorial past that other religions have quietly suffered euthanasia. A strong social faith, like nationalism or communism, springing from the living experience of men, could sweep such a play of masques away overnight.

Indeed, it is hard to escape the conviction that just here lies the real religious problem of today. How are the faith in social justice and the faith in beauty to be reunited? The long theological reconstructions of the 19th century are over. Present attempts to bring religion and science together are but half-hearted; they appeal only to the newly awakened. They have enlisted no man of first-rate intelligence. For those who have come to understand and share the scientific faith, the conflict of religious belief and science is no longer a problem.

For them, when it is a matter of truth and falsity, scientific methods must decide. More and more of the intelligent and educated class have lost all desire to bolster up ancient supernaturalisms. For them the real choice is that between these competing gospels.

Historic religions embraced them both, and welded them together in one living faith. One church sheltered the stern spiritual prophet and the tender painter. The same intellectual symbols kindled moral enthusiasm and the artist's imagination. Today the ancient beliefs can still serve as the terms of poetic communion with past experience, but they cannot interpret the vital currents of modern society. One cannot master industrialism with the Christian epic. Those who feel the one are cut off by a chasm from those who feel the other. They are living in different worlds, the past and the present, the old civilization and the new. One cannot interrupt Bach's masses to denounce the profit-system. One cannot proclaim the brotherhood of Jew and Gentile, Christian and Moslem, at the foot of the Cross. Too many long centuries of concentrated bitterness stand between.

Such a fusion of Beauty and Righteousness can only occur when men have found a faith that will not set their emotions warring against their experience, their hearts against their intellects. So long as men are torn between two worlds, they cannot find their feelings undivided. Such a faith cannot shirk the task of serious thought. It must be

worked out at first intellectually, in the form of a serious philosophy of religion that will give meaning to human life in a world of scientific techniques and concepts. There is little trace of such a philosophy today. Men are afraid of theology, afraid of reflecting on their religious life, afraid to think things through. The philosophers in their eagerness to understand the implications of the scientific faith have neglected the problems of incorporating in an expanded naturalism the values that men have found essential in living.

Such a religious faith must build a really serious ethics, an ethics that will draw upon the past to enlarge present insights, that will meet the problems of genuinely contemporary moral life. It must illuminate the ends of life possible in an industrial and scientific world; it must find a way to combine the transcendence of the ideal with the flexible technique of critical revision. It must furnish a serious æsthetic adjustment to modern life. It must free us from a merely parasitic enjoyment of the past, that communion with the beauty of bygone achievement may flower in a creation of new symbols expressing our own aspirations. It must work out a philosophy that will deepen our ethics, make it strong enough to afford consolation in adversity and intelligent enough to give guidance in prosperity. Such a philosophy must unite piety to the generations that went before with moral idealism for the future, and not leave religion an affair of incense and choir-boys divorced from life.

Such a faith it is too much to expect while we are still struggling with the pains of transition. If we ever frankly face our new lives, if we ever come to bring our feelings to the support of our intellectual acceptance of the conditions of our living, we may then hope for a faith that will renew the miracle of ancient achievement, and satisfy at one and the same time the intellect of the scientist, the imagination of the artist, and the vision of the prophet.

Part II

THE RELIGIOUS CHALLENGE OF MODERN CIVILIZATION

Chapter VIII

THE INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGE

We have tried to give an historical account of the influences at work since the eighteenth century that have led inevitably to the confused and uncertain situation in which religion now finds itself. We have seen how the spirit and methods of science have radically transformed not only the traditional religious interpretation of the universe, but still more the basic conception of the source and nature of religion itself. We have also pointed out how in the short space of a century our new industrial civilization has changed the whole manner in which man gains his livelihood on this planet, and has brought into man's life vast ranges of new experiences, attitudes and relations that have crowded into the background, or even made quite meaningless, many experiences that were formerly dominant, vital and universal. We have suggested that these revolutionary changes have made many of the expressions of religion that grew naturally out of living experiences in an earlier society seem quite irrelevant and devoid of significance in this modern industrial age.

We have also pointed out how the inevitable conflict between traditional religion and the new in-

fluences of science and industrialism has driven the less daring and more conservatively inclined back to the ramparts of a rigid orthodoxy, while the more adventurous have attempted through various forms of "liberalism" to mediate between the old and the new. But neither of these movements has proved satisfactory to the modern mind. Orthodoxy has turned its back deliberately upon the new knowledge and the new experience in the desperate attempt to preserve the traditional religion at any cost. The various forms of "liberalism" have refused to face all the facts and to follow them to their logical conclusions. Their attempts to "reinterpret" traditional religion have been nothing more or less than half-way positions between the old and the new, mere compromises that might satisfy the more timid souls for a time, but that do not solve the religious problem for today.

It is the contention of the authors that the time has come for a frank and honest facing of all the new facts and conditions that science and industrialism have disclosed. There must be a thoroughgoing grappling with these new forces in modern life in their bearing upon the religious experience of man. There must be a complete reconstruction of religion, so far as that may be possible, without fear or evasion or compromise, in the light of the new knowledge that has been gained and the new conditions under which man must live his life both individually and collectively. This task must be undertaken, not for the sake of belittling or destroying

anything good or true that we have received from the past, but rather to free religion from the traditional encumbrances that are today choking its life and paralyzing its influence. Thus alone can a reconstructed religion play its true and fundamental part in interpreting and guiding these great new forces of the twentieth century to high and worthwhile ends.

It is clear from what has preceded that it is no longer a question of religion, or no religion, in man's life. In a far deeper sense than is often realized, man is incurably religious. Human nature has always demanded some religious expression; and though old gods crumble, it is incredible that this need should not persist. The vital question is what kind of a religion shall man have? It is also clear that, from the beginning, religion has constantly been changing, slowly passing from lower to higher forms with new social evironments and the gradual widening and deepening of man's mental and moral experience. Generally speaking, the movement has been from crude, irrational, materialistic, unethical and individualistic conceptions and forms, toward more rational, spiritual, ethical and social expressions. What man's religion has been in any particular age or clime has depended in part on his leaders or prophets, but still more on how far along man has himself come in his mental and moral development. However lofty or universal has been the insight of the great prophet, his message has always been colored by the special needs of a particular

people, and interpreted in terms of their more or less limited experience and knowledge. But just because religion is the outgrowth of human nature and an integral part of man's life as an individual and as a member of society, not only will it always exist in some form; it will continue to grow and change as man changes and grows.

Let us also recognize that religion today is passing through a transition period more searching and more deeply unsettling for traditional faiths than any similar period in the past, just because modern science has so completely revolutionized all our conceptions of the universe, of the nature of man, of human relations, and of religion itself; and because our industrial civilization has brought into man's life whole ranges of new experiences and new relations that had no existence whatever a century ago.

But let us not forget that a transition is a movement towards what does not yet exist. No one can predict with any certainty the form religion will take in man's life tomorrow. We know only that great changes are taking place, that still greater changes are to come, and that it ill behooves anyone to be dogmatic or over-confident in any statement as to the future. All we can hope to do in these closing chapters is to make clear the challenge that the twentieth century presents to religion as it is today, and to make some practical suggestions that may help to point the way toward a more complete reconstruction of religion for this new age. Others

may be stimulated to carry out more adequately what the authors feel is here all too imperfectly suggested.

Modern civilization presents to religion, in the first place, an intellectual challenge that cannot be postponed if religion in its organized forms is to retain the respect of thinking men. In an age whose thought is characterized increasingly by scientific methods and scientific attitudes, it is imperative that religion come to terms with the implications of contemporary scientific theory as reflected in present-day philosophies. Orthodoxy for the time being has set itself deliberately against science for fear of what may happen to traditional conceptions; and it is not a groundless fear. The traditionalist sees more clearly than the average modernist how destructive are the scientific views and methods to what is preached and taught as religion. He is determined to cling to the old and familiar faith, and, if need be, to go down with the flag of orthodoxy still flying. There is something heroic in this attitude; but it does not not solve the problem of religion. The present generation may be willing to stand loyally by such leaders because of old habits and attitudes formed before science had gained the ascendency it holds today. But the new generation of young men and women now in our schools and colleges, educated from the kindergarten up in the scientific view-point and spirit, are already hopelessly lost to orthodox conceptions and churches.

If he hopes to be ultimately successful in the

fundamental reconstruction of religion now demanded, the liberal must dare to be far more thoroughgoing in his thought than the average modernist of today. Instead of playing in a dilettante way with various conceptions of science, employing its phraseology in his sermons and preaching popular series on the "reconciliation of science with religion," he must have the intellectual ability and the moral courage to come to a clear understanding of what science means in its various fields. He must realize what constitutes the body of scientific knowledge as tested and established by the approved methods of scientific verification. He must understand the basic assumptions on which scientific verification proceeds, assumptions like the uniformity of nature and the universal presence of causal relationships. If he really intends to come to terms with science, he must view with sympathy rather than with hostility the philosophic picture of the world which contemporary thinkers have pieced together from the scientific knowledge so far achieved. He must recognize the vast change that has come over philosophic thought in the last generation, and abandon the idealisms and the evolutionary faiths that during the 19th century preserved supernaturalism against a narrow and inadequate scientific dogmatism. He must realize that the serious philosophies of the present day have gone to school to science for their methods and their concepts, and that building on its spirit they have burst asunder the tight little world of 19th century physics. They

have formulated an enlarged naturalism that now has room for all the verified demands of the moral and religious life. If he feels that these modern naturalisms are still too intellectual, too barren and Puritan in their range of values, that is a challenge to him to add his own experience within and not outside their framework. If he is to contribute effectively to this enterprise, he must share the scientific habit of mind, the scientific temper of thought, and the spirit of scientific inquiry, even as he brings his own values and insights. And lastly, having thus mastered the fundamental conceptions of modern science, and entered wholeheartedly into the spirit of modern naturalistic philosophies, he must dare to face frankly and honestly all the implications that such thought possesses for traditional religion.

When he has achieved the ability and the courage to do this, he is bound to see that there is no place in his thought for the old conceptions of supernaturalism and miracles, for the old idea of an infallible revelation, for a transcendental realm of final religious or moral truth, for the popular notions of God in which generations have professed to believe, or for the literal truth of any of the religious doctrines that have come down from a faraway past. This does not mean that these traditional ideas possess no value. They point to significant elements of human experience, elements which any adequate philosophy must take into account. But in the light of the new universe into

which science and scientific philosophies have ushered us, an understanding of their value and meaning is possible today only as we refuse to accept them as literal descriptions of fact, and view them rather as the symbolic and poetic expression of man's deepest experiences in past centuries.

The flood of scientific discovery has helped to emancipate mankind at last from thraldom to the primitive folk-lore that underlies all the older theologies. The conception of a little geocentric universe created as a private preserve for the Hominidae has been replaced by something infinitely more grand and glorious. To quote from a recent scientist, "We have to conceive of a universe incredibly vast, with thousands upon thousands of suns accompanied by their satellites, each moving swiftly on its course with the utmost uniformity and precision, each isolated and apparently independent, yet all parts of a harmonious whole, kept in their places by the mutual influence of one upon the other. And in this complex of complexes all matter is undergoing constant change. Slowly but surely there is continuous transformation, evolution. All that we know as inorganic matter, all that we know as life, has been built up from simple elementary substance and passes again to simple elementary substance. Thus has the earth, a minute attendant of one of the younger and less important stars, come into being. Thus has man and all other types of life evolved. He is an infinitesimal part of the great

scheme, like all the rest; governed by natural law, like all the rest."

This is the magnificent generalization which the combined facts of astronomy, of chemistry, of physics, of geology, of biology, have given us. This is the generalization accepted by every scientist today, which the organized forces of ignorance still call an unsupported hypothesis, and against which only ignorant men can still set as unquestionable truth the mythology of the ancient Hebrews. But if this were all, the seeker after truth might feel inclined to think, as he has been told so many times, that science has indeed ruled religion out of the universe. Fortunately it is only half the new truth, and the least important for religion at that. If the natural sciences have seemed to dethrone God from the heavens and to leave man "a lonely wanderer in solitary grandeur" in this universe, the social sciences, later in the field, have enthroned religion in the essential nature of man and proved that it is an integral part of human life. Thus they have removed the basis of religion from the region of mystery, which until recently has constituted the universe for man, and transferred it to man himself, where it is embedded in the very constitution of human nature. And no further discovery of the natural sciences can ever again, as during the nineteenth century, disturb the sure foundations of religion.

It is the sciences of anthropology, ethnology,

sociology and psychology,—these social sciences that followed the natural sciences,—that have helped us to see that religion is, not because the gods are, but because man is what he is, with a mind that thinks, a heart that feels, and a spirit that aspires. If, therefore, one is tempted to turn away from the new and infinite universe which science has revealed with the feeling that religion has been lost, and that science and religion are utterly incompatible, let him study these social sciences and find to his joy that the same scientific method and spirit have found in man himself the source and foundation of all religion.

As he pursues these studies he discovers that the traditional beliefs he can no longer accept are not a primary part of religion, and that since their rather late appearance in religious history they have been constantly undergoing change and alteration. He thus finds himself free to adapt his intellectual beliefs once more to his growing knowledge. He comes to see, also, that religion as such is not bound up with any particular "scientific world-view" which one may hold; for the religious life may be lived under all the differing pictures which philosophy may present of the world.

He learns that religion is primarily a thing, not of beliefs or organizations, but of the deepest emotions of human life, of emotional drives, attitudes, aspirations; and that religion consists of the testing of these by reason and experience, and of their organization in harmony with ideal ends and purposes

in such a way that these deeper emotions become the mighty dynamic and inspiration leading one toward the heights of moral and spiritual character. He comes to see that religion is a way of life, not a kind of belief or a particular organization, and so he seeks to live "the life that is life indeed."

As an intelligent man he accepts provisionally today's scientific world-view, and he rejoices in the careful, painstaking method by which science searches for facts. He respects that method and accepts the tentative conclusions that science reaches as to the universe, the nature of man, and human relationships. He knows these are the best knowledge men yet possess. He knows that all matters of fact, of truth and falsity, are to be decided by the best available methods of inquiry and testing; he calls these methods by the collective name of science. But he knows also that the objects which science describes, whose causes and consequences it elaborates, possess a wealth of meaning, of significance, of value, which is quite irrelevant to literal truth or falsity. He therefore demands a philosophy that shall include the whole range of human experience, not merely a narrow fragment of intellectual interests. He tries to bring intelligence to bear on the criticism of all the moments of life, that they may be ordered into a rich whole. But he realizes that most of life is wisely spent in living, in enjoying, in creating and striving; and he demands that his life shall "mean intensely and mean good." In this enterprise science can enter only as a servant to aid the

living of the best life. He has learned that he himself must put the meaning into life, a meaning based on his own intelligence and experience.

"Men move between extremes. They conceive of themselves as gods, or feign a powerful and cunning god as an ally who bends the world to do their bidding and meet their wishes. Disillusioned, they disown the world that disappoints them; and hugging their ideals to themselves as their own possession, stand in haughty aloofness apart from the hard course of events that pays so little heed to our hopes and aspirations. But a mind that has opened itself to experience and that has ripened through its discipline knows its own littleness and impotencies; it knows that its wishes and acknowledgments are not final measures of the universe, whether in knowledge or in conduct, and hence are, in the end, transient. But it also knows that its juvenile assumption of power and achievement is not a dream wholly to be forgotten. It implies a unity with the universe that is to be preserved. The belief, and the effort of thought and struggle which it inspires, are also the doing of the universe, and they in some way, however slight, carry the universe forward. A chastened sense of our own importance, apprehension that it is not a yard-stick by which to measure the whole, is consistent with the belief that we and our endeavors are significant not only for themselves but in the whole.

"Fidelity to the nature to which we belong, as parts however weak, demands that we cherish our

desires and ideals until we have converted them into intelligence, revised them in terms of the ways and means which nature makes possible. When we have used our thought to the utmost and thrown into the moving unbalanced balance of things our puny strength, we know that though the universe slay us still we may trust, for our lot is one with whatever is good in existence. We know that such thought and effort is one condition of the coming into existence of the better. As far as we are concerned, it is the only condition, for it alone is in our power. To ask more than this is childish; but to ask less is a recreance no less egotistic, involving no less a cutting of ourselves from the universe than does the expectation that it meet and satisfy our every wish. The striving of man for objects of imagination is a continuation of natural processes; it is something man has learned from the world in which he occurs, not something which he arbitrarily injects into that world. When he adds perception and desires to these endeavors, it is not after all he who adds; the addition is again the doing of nature and a further complication of its domain. When man perceives clearly and adequately that he is within nature, a part of its interactions, he sees that the line to be drawn is not between action and thought, or action and appreciation, but between blind, slavish, meaningless action, and action that is free, significant, directed, and responsible." [1]

The thoughtful man will not find in such a nat-

[1] John Dewey, *Experience and Nature,* Chapter X.

uralistic picture of the world a scene from which he must escape to a supernatural realm for aid or inspiration. Instead of "softening down the old dogmas" while groping vaguely for something to take their place, instead of clinging pitifully to the old with one hand while reaching out fearfully for the new, instead of pondering on how much he can afford to let go, or how much can be salvaged from the wreck of traditional beliefs, he will seek to respond to the intellectual challenge of modern thought. He will joyously and confidently begin to reconstruct religion in his own life, under the inspiration of all the light that the sciences and philosophies of this modern age have to offer. Preserving continuity with the best that has gone before and yet daring to launch fearlessly upon the deeps that lie beyond, he will be confident that, whatever of the old may have disappeared, there is ample intellectual foundation in this modern age for a fresh and enduring faith, that all about us lie the materials for a new and nobler structure. It is out of these modern resources that will come at length both an emotional inspiration and a practical procedure for enriching human life immeasurably.

One who has thus freed himself from the external authority of a literal tradition can dare without fear or compromise to reconstruct his religion, in both belief and conduct, in harmony with the new world into which we have come. Then for the first time such a man finds himself in a position to understand, appreciate and enjoy the different forms un-

der which religion has found expression in the past. So long as he regarded religion as "revealed" or "inspired" or imposed by an external authority, so long as he sought literal truth about the world in some core of ancient belief, modern man was of necessity blinded to the true significance of earlier forms of religion. He failed to see that dogmas that seemed to him superstition and forms that seemed meaningless were once the natural and inevitable expression of a vivid and living experience in a pre-scientific age. But with his new insight he realizes that religion is a growing, changing thing, that its forms, its doctrines and it institutions are determined by the particular age and social environment that saw their birth. Hence as he looks back on the Christian myth or tradition, to which so many pagan sources contributed, he reads this myth not as something "false," but rather as a great epic poem, perhaps the greatest epic of the Christian era; an epic in which man's hopes and fears, his successes and his frustrations, his noble strivings and his earnest aspirations, are all recorded with simple pathos and poignant beauty.

Thus he can distinguish between the true religious insight and the mythical belief in which it was embodied. Thus the radical Protestant may read with sympathy and new understanding the history of the Roman Catholic Church, and see through new eyes the deeper poetic meaning in dogmas and rituals from which he formerly turned away in indifference if not in disgust. Thus the enlightened Chris-

tian can worship in the Jewish synagogue, and enter sympathetically into the spirit of aspiration of which the reading of the Law and the observance of the ancient ritual are the symbolic expression. It is only to the literal-minded that these older expressions of religion seem meaningless and absurd. Truly to understand religion,—its sources, the obstacles it meets in man's own nature, the difficulties it encounters in its environment, its struggles, its pathos, and its deathless aspiration,—is to read through the eyes of the imagination the profoundest experiences in the mental and moral development of humanity.

Through the translation of the sacred books of the East in the last century, and through living communion with the leaders of the great Oriental religions, Westerners have learned how to understand and appreciate those ancient faiths. The Parliament of Religions held in connection with the Chicago World's Fair brought to this country representatives of all the world's religions. It was a new experience in the religious life of humanity, an experience that made a profound impression on all who shared it. Since then the study of comparative religions has helped to break down the old barriers of ignorance and prejudice, and has revealed the close sympathy existing between the higher levels of all religions, past and present. Men have discovered that while "religions are many, religion is one"—one not in beliefs, not in experiences embodied, not in forms elaborated with loving care,

not in spiritual insights attained, not in ideals striven for, but one in deeply feeling and profoundly interpreting the significant moments of human life. Men are coming to think of all the various faiths of mankind as but the differing languages through which man has been seeking to express, however imperfectly, his faith, his hope, and his aspiration,—seeking as best he might with the knowledge at his command, to relate himself intelligently to the universe of which he is a part, and to his fellows from whom he is divided.

It is a part of the intellectual challenge to religion today to differentiate between traditional myth and spiritual insight in all religions, that men may preserve the true insight wherever it may be found, and employ it in enriching and ennobling their own religious life. To see all religious beliefs as the metaphors of discourse, as the symbolic renderings of deep human experiences, frees one from the vain attempt to find a core of religious truth common to every historic faith. The experiences of men have varied from age to age and clime to clime, and even in the face of the universal crises of all mankind, birth and love and death, men have felt with subtle but inescapable shades of difference. It is of the very nature of metaphor and poetry to be literally untranslatable into another tongue. The attempt to find a common prose for all this imaginative symbol leads to the blurring of that which should be kept distinct, the loss of the rich overtones so fraught with feeling. It is just because

every form of the religious life enshrines something uniquely precious, something that could be expressed in no other way, that it is the part of wisdom to strive so far as possible to enter into that insight. A true understanding of religious faith thus makes sympathy and coöperation possible and indispensable, without leading to intellectual flabbiness.

To take the beliefs and rites of the past for what they are, neither crude attempts at science nor techniques of magic, but the rendering of a rich experience, points to a possible union of reverence for their imaginative beauty with moral idealism for the future. It provides a basis of intellectual clarity on which the Gospel of Beauty and the Gospel of Social Justice can come together. It should be not impossible to understand, enjoy, and use the imaginative wealth, not only of our own, but of all great religious traditions, without being necessarily bound to the limited experiences they have expressed. Our own faith must be attached to spiritual ideals that meet the needs of our own life; but it has ever been the function of religion to enlarge the experience of the moment and lead men into a broader world. Surely no nobler way of extending our own sympathies and adding our own insights exists than that offered by the imaginative and artistic symbols that have served other men with other needs.

Chapter IX

THE SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

The word *spiritual* has been employed in religion to denote so many different things, ranging from the crudest of self-seeking superstitions to the most high-minded concern with furthering the true good of one's fellows, that we hesitate to use it in connection with the religious challenge of today. In the region of human activity called the spiritual life, much vagueness prevails, the outlines of thought are apt to be blurred, and the feelings aroused tend to be indistinct and confused. The word *spiritual* has thus become for many a synonym for muddy thought and sentimental emotionalism. Because of this cheapening, we are sorely tempted to discard it entirely. But in its best significance, the word *spiritual* points to a quality of human experience too precious to be disregarded, a quality, moreover, for which there exists no other term half so satisfactory. The only salvation of the careful thinker is to attach a precise and definite meaning to the old word.

Negatively, spirituality is not to be confused with emotionalism. The spiritual person is not one in whom the life of sheer feeling predominates, sweeping him along with little intelligent direction.

Neither is spirituality to be identified with the possession of any so-called "psychic powers," all too often the manifestation of a pathological condition. The "psychic" person is usually the farthest removed from the spiritual. Nor is the individual most fluent in public prayer, or he who talks most easily and glibly of religion and "spiritual things," possessed of any distinctive spiritual qualities. The most spiritual are usually endowed with a becoming modesty and reticence. Nor is a peculiarly unctuous tone of voice, or a "holy" look in the eye, indicative of spiritual life or power. There is a tendency to associate spirituality with mysticism, with some deep consciousness of a supposed supernatural or some nearness to the assumed "spiritual powers of the universe." Psychologists, however, have explained all such manifestations of "the spiritual" in purely natural terms, often as pathological abnormalities; many have grown sceptical as to whether there is any such thing as "the spiritual" outside the domain of psychiatry.

If we mean by the spiritual something coming into life from outside in a supernatural way, something that one receives from above when a miracle of conversion takes place, something that, regardless of his high ideals and his consecrated living, the natural man can know nothing about, then we must conclude that such a conception of the spiritual can have no place in the thinking of an intelligent man today. There is in modern thought no room for a special spiritual realm divorced from the

nature in which our experience is lived, for spiritual forces that can break in upon the natural course of events. Spiritual can have a meaning only if it be applied to certain qualities of human experience as lived in its natural setting in the universe whose secrets scientific inquiry seeks to penetrate.

But if religion be taken as involving no necessary connection with a transcendental and supernatural spiritual realm, if its true home be not in the skies but in man's own nature, if it be a natural expression of human living and not a supernatural endowment from without, then the spiritual life must be a certain level of human experience, a certain quality of man's action, a certain phase of religious feeling. Precisely what level, what quality, what phase of feeling do we distinguish as spiritual?

It is easier to point to examples than to give a formal definition with any hope of agreement. When Socrates was hailed before his fellow-Athenians to answer the charges brought against him, he sought to justify his passionate urge to examine man's conduct. "I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike," Plato reports him to have said, "to take no thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to look to the good of your souls." This cardinal insistence on the good of the soul is of the essence of the spiritual life. What that good is, has varied from religion to religion; toward its further definition philosophers and prophets and religious geniuses have contributed their insight. But preoccupation with the

soul, with the inner life, with the problems presented when man attempts to formulate his highest ends, has ever been the mark of the spiritually minded.

Needless to say, the soul and its good have received a variety of interpretations in the past; and the realities in human experience that have been so designated are viewed in a new light in present-day naturalistic philosophies. " 'Soul' when freed from all traces of traditional materialistic animism," writes John Dewey, "denotes the qualities of psycho-physical activities as far as these are organized into unity. Some bodies have souls preëminently as some conspicuously have fragrance, color, and solidity. To make this statement is to call attention to properties that characterize these bodies, not to import a mysterious non-natural entity or force. Were there not in actual existence properties of sensitivity and marvelously comprehensive and delicate participative response characterizing living bodies, mythical notions about the nature of the soul would never have risen. The myths have lost whatever poetic quality they once had; when offered as science they are superstitious encumbrances. But the idiomatic non-doctrinal use of the word soul retains a sense of the realities concerned. To say emphatically of a particular person that he has soul or a great soul is not to utter a platitude, applicable equally to all human beings. It expresses the conviction that the man or woman in question has in marked degree qualities of sensitive, rich and coördinated participation in all the situations of life.

Thus works of art, music, poetry, painting, architecture, have soul, while others are dead, mechanical. When the organization called soul is free, moving and operative, initial as well as terminal, it is spirit. Qualities are both static, substantial, and transitive. Spirit quickens; it is not only alive, but spirit gives life. Animals are spirited, but man is a living spirit. He lives in his works and his works do follow him. Soul is form, spirit informs. It is the moving function of that of which soul is the substance." [1]

The religious life has always peculiarly concerned itself with the good of the soul. "Religion has a second and higher side," writes Santayana, "which looks to the end toward which we move as piety looks to the conditions of progress and the sources from which we draw our energies. This aspiring side of religion may be called Spirituality. Spirituality is nobler than piety, because what would fulfil our being and make it worth having is what alone lends value to that being's source. Nothing can be lower or more wholly instrumental than the substance and the cause of all things. The gift of existence would be worthless unless existence was good and supported at least a possible happiness. A man is spiritual when he lives in the presence of the ideal, and whether he eat or drink does so for the sake of a true and ultimate good. He is spiritual when he envisages his goal so frankly that his whole material life becomes a transparent and transitive vehicle, an

[1] John Dewey, *Experience and Nature,* Chapter VII.

instrument which scarcely arrests attention but allows the spirit to use it economically and with perfect detachment and freedom. This spiritual mastery is, of course, no slashing and forced synthesis of things into a system; it is rather an inward aim and fixity in affection that knows what to take and what to leave in a world over which it diffuses something of its own peace. It threads its way through the landscape with so little temptation to distraction that it can salute every irrelevant thing as Saint Francis did the sun and moon, with courtesy and a certain affectionate detachment.

"The spiritual man, though not ashamed to be a beggar, is cognisant of what wealth can do and what it cannot. His unworldliness is true knowledge of the world, not so much a gaping and busy acquaintance as a quiet comprehension and estimation which, while it cannot come without intercourse, can very well lay intercourse aside." [1]

Spirituality in this sense is to be contrasted with worldliness, with indiscriminate immersion in the passing surface of things. "Is there a spirituality really wiser than common-sense? That there is appears in many directions. Worldliness is arrest and absorption in the instrumentalities of life; but instrumentalities cannot exist without ultimate purposes, and it suffices to lift the eyes to those purposes and to question the will sincerely about its essential preferences, to institute a catalogue of rational goods, by pursuing any of which we escape

[1] George Santayana, *Reason in Religion,* Chapter XI.

worldliness. The spiritual man needs, therefore, something more than a cultivated sympathy with the brighter scintillation of things. He needs to refer that scintillation to some essential light, so that in reviewing the motley aspects of experience he may not be reduced to culling superciliously the flowers that please him, but may view in them all only images and varied symbols of some eternal good. Spirituality has never flourished apart from religion, except momentarily, perhaps, in some master-mind, whose original intuition at once became a religion to his followers. For it is religion that knows how to interpret the casual rationalities in the world and isolate their principle, setting this principle up in the face of nature as nature's standard and model."

Spirituality, therefore, is a quality of the life that has organized its ends about some ultimate principle, and acts always with that supreme end in view. It expends loving care upon the formulation of its own highest good, and often finds it necessary to retreat from the hurly-burly of action for quiet meditation on the values of things. It strives to seek the highest, and to that highest it attaches itself, eager in devotion and confident in the face of setbacks. Such a life cultivates insight and vision; it issues in action, but it has an inner intensity, a flight of the alone to the alone, in which it receives inspiration and sustaining power.

It is clear that this life in the ideal has been close to the heart of religion through the ages. At first

the values the religious man sought to cultivate and preserve were elementary and crude; but they have grown gradually more complex and refined as man's spiritual experience has been enriched. The Hebrew prophets brought righteousness and mercy, the gospels added love and inward purity of heart. Age after age has redefined the spiritual and added fresh insight, slowly building the fund of spirituality on which we may draw.

In the midst of our flood of material goods and comforts, the spiritual challenge of this modern age to religion is not to forget the good of the soul. Worldliness, absorption in the mechanics of living, has been all too often enshrined on the very altar itself. Liberal religion has grown complacent; it has come to stake its all on the mere multiplication and generous sharing of the means of living. It no longer calls for a deeper plumbing of the needs of human personality; it no longer awakens the sense of the insufficiency of all present attainment in the light of the vision of what human life might be. Its optimism shrinks from looking the natural man in the eye and telling him he is damned because of his sin. It inculcates no intense feeling of dissatisfaction with a superficial life; it arouses no sense of spiritual pain at the meaningless lives the vast majority of us lead. It has lost the realization of the finitude of all human achievement in contrast with the infinity of spiritual vision. Still less does it urge the reformulation of what can constitute the true good of the soul in our modern world.

The spiritual challenge to religion, then, is first of all a challenge to spiritualize the personal life. Men must be awakened to the insufficiency of mere worldliness, of living from day to day and from hand to mouth. They must examine their souls to discover a better perspective on the goods of existence, a clearer sense of what things in the last analysis are most worth while, and what are of lesser value. They must be helped to live on that level on which all human goods are organized about some supreme loyalty, and enjoyed in the illumination it affords. With all the emphasis today laid on the objective aspects of religion, on the busy doing of good to others, men tend to forget the needs of the personal religious life. And in all the confusion of thought and the mechanizing tendencies of this rushing, bustling machine age, the needs of the inner lives of men and women were never greater than today. We are devoted to the religion of Martha; we need to remember that Mary also chose the good part.

Confused and distracted by worries and responsibilities of every kind, men still need the opportunity for silence, for quiet meditation, for time to collect themselves and reflect on the serious values of life. They need the inspiration and the courage to bear, the consolation that comes with devotion to a well-ordered scheme of living. They need that peace of soul that in the past religion has so often brought. Whatever changes have taken place in our outlook upon the universe, there still remain the deep experiences of living when all that is within

one cries out for comfort and sustaining power, for the courage to face life with fortitude and patience. Loved ones still die, and those who grieve are left alone in a world that seems empty and desolate. Even for those who have all their lives professed a belief in personal immortality, it is a question how much real strength this faith brings in the hour of trial. But from what source are the increasing number of men for whom it has grown dim or even vanished to derive comfort and the strength to bear? Is there nothing save the old familiar words of traditional faith, in their literal sense never quite so empty and meaningless as in the face of sorrow? Is some sort of brave stoicism in the presence of death the only road to peace? These universal human needs persist. Men must still meet alone the hour of dissolution; far harder, they must face bereavement, the inevitable separation from loved ones. Must not an adequate religion today provide an emotional adjustment to these crises of life that will help men to meet them in calmness and courage, with a solemn joy for all that life has brought of love and companionship, for all the beautiful memories that remain, and for all the spiritual influence that abides forever in lives once enriched by the presence of the living personality?

How often are one's most cherished plans, one's dearest hopes and most sincere ambitions, involved in utter frustration through no remediable fault of one's own! It may be some precious friendship shattered, or some passionate faith in a great cause

that beats all unavailing against the wall of indifference and greed. As one thus faces inevitable failure, whence is to come the power to endure defeat and struggle on? When all that gave meaning to life seems to have vanished, when every incentive to further striving appears forever swept away, what is there that can restore the soul? In such an hour of bitter frustration, what are electric lights and automobiles and subways and airplanes, what are all the techniques that science has to offer for the mastery of the material basis of life? It is then that the spirit of man calls *de profundis,* for a religion that can minister to the stricken, discouraged, and despairing soul. What then matters the historicity of the Genesis stories, the accuracy of the Gospel narratives, or the literal truth of ancient doctrine? In the face of utter failure, man cries aloud in agony of spirit for a sure vision of the meaning of life that can comfort and sustain, that can help him take up the broken and tangled threads once more unaffrighted and undismayed.

Sooner or later all human beings pass through the shadow of moral failure and defeat. It is not given to every man to know sin in its full intensity; but some there are who must cry out, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" When some devastating temptation beclouds the ideals, weakens the will, paralyzes the judgment, unsettles the very foundations of character, and ends perhaps by blasting the reputation of a lifetime, involving friends and loved ones in sorrow and

shame, in this dark hour of moral defeat whence is to come the needed consoling and restoring power?

Sorrow, frustration, and moral failure have not been dispelled by science and the machine. It is not enough to see clearly the modern world-view, or to interpret the novel experiences of an industrial society. It is the spiritual weakness of liberal religion that it has failed to understand the deep roots in human nature of the myths of orthodoxy. The fall of man, his weakness and impotence in the face of spiritual aspiration, above all the passionate appeal to the living Christ—these may be imaginative symbols, but they are symbols of an inescapable reality. In many ways man is no longer so bound to a meager material existence as was once his universal lot. But before the deeper problems of living, those where scientific technique are of no avail, his spiritual needs are as insistent as ever,—more insistent, perhaps, through the very crumbling of the old faiths that once satisfied them. Yet it is clear that these eternal needs can not be met in the old ways. The familiar words of comfort no longer console, the old appeals no longer carry conviction, the old platitudes no longer suffice. The needs of the personal religious life have not changed. But man's experience in his new world has so altered, his outlook upon life and the universe and religion itself is so different from that of yesterday, that the old sources of consolation and power no longer serve man in his extremity. Myths can embody precious insight into human life; but one can not pray to a

myth for help. Amidst much that is new, a vital religious life today must still respond to these immemorial needs. It must still minister effectively to the bereaved, wounded, and defeated spirit of man.

Just because our modern environment, both intellectual and social, is so largely novel, we find an emotional adjustment to the inevitable conditions of living fraught with unusual difficulty. In our complicated social structure the opportunities for maladjustment between man and man and group and group have greatly multiplied. Psychology and psychiatry have revealed the deep-seated causes of widespread emotional frustrations, leading to misery, mental disorders, and serious physical disease. The divorce courts testify to the terrifying emotional problems in our experimental reconstruction of the relations between man and wife. Such emotional maladjustment lies at the basis of much of the incompatibility between parents and children so destructive of happiness in the home. Such failure to order the feelings aright explains the "incorrigible boy" and the "bad girl"; it is the reason why young people "go wrong."

Fortunately many such cases of maladjustment can be helped by the knowledge the skilled scientific psychiatrist has already won. But prevention is better than cure. There is great need for intelligent instruction in the profound part the emotions play in human life, and for wise guidance in their proper organization and their right control. If this work began in the home during infancy, and was carried

on and supplemented by more expert training in the schools, our boys and girls would reach maturity with a clearer knowledge of their emotional natures and with habits formed that should insure the control and not the abuse of these primary forces of human nature.

Religion springs from the deepest emotions and has in the past provided the organization whereby a serious emotional adjustment to life was attained. It has integrated the raw materials of personality into a stable and unified character. It must today avail itself of all the light which recent psychologists have discovered, and supplement its instruction with the expert training of the emotional lives of young people in the home and school. It must insist that adult sick souls find, not the sentimental, but the scientific means and methods to enable them to bring harmony and unity into their disordered emotional lives. But religion cannot abandon to psychiatry its ancient function of providing the ultimate organization of human life. Knowledge of the intricacies of human personality alone can provide no effective goal of human living. Modern psychologists have discovered many illuminating facts and many useful techniques; but by and large their thinking has been philosophically puerile and spiritually blind. They have been unable to distinguish between the springs of human action and the ends of conduct; and their disregard of the ultimate problem of formulating some worthy end has led to the destruction of the self-discipline built up through

ages of moral experience. Assuredly the older discipline needs reconstruction; but that reconstruction cannot be formulated in terms of allowing free scope to impulse. Religion has resolved inner conflict by setting up a higher loyalty to which man's being was consecrated; and unless such a directing vision is present, and man's emotional life firmly attached to it, the outcome can only be license and confusion.

The great religious traditions have awakened and strengthened this emotional loyalty to their ideals by all the wealth of symbolism and art builded into their fabric. The stately ritual, the noble myth, the beautiful service of worship and adoration that centers round the altar, have won not so much the mind as the feelings. By means of this emotional piety the insights of spiritual prophets have been transmitted from generation to generation. Such beauty is the indispensable body in which the living spirit of religion makes its habitation; it is the vehicle that attaches men to the authority of great prophets of old, that clothes their austerity in a rich and satisfying imaginative garment. In times whose spiritual needs have outgrown the old visions, such beauty may be cherished for its own sake alone, not as the symbol of high consecration. Those who realize the necessity of a fresh facing of human problems may grow impatient with mere worship; those whose feelings are still stirred may shrink from the temerity of the prophet who calls for new insight and vital interpretation of experience. But the soul of religion can never awaken wide response so long as it is a dis-

embodied spirit. It must capture the feelings as well as the intellect; it must provide an æsthetic adjustment to life. For all its inadequacy today, the traditional world of religious myth and symbol does still call forth this emotional loyalty. That is the strength of those expressions of religion that rely on the beauty of the immemorial past. Liberal religion has all too often failed to realize the extent to which such an imaginative and symbolic embodiment of spiritual truth ministers to the highest ends of living. It has been austere and bare, appealing to the intellect without the heart. The tragedy of the religious life today lies in this divorce between emotional attachment and spiritual vision. Our minds may be in the modern world, but our hearts are still in the old. In this new age an adequate religion must learn to rebuild the symbols of the past to serve present needs. It must offer a serious emotional and æsthetic adjustment to life.

There is grave danger that in the shock of meeting the new world men will lose spiritual continuity with the past. In the violent reaction of many minds against traditional forms of religion, there is the vague feeling that the emerging religion must represent a complete break with what has gone before. In many quarters there is the shallow and superficial feeling that all the bibles of the race, all the theologies of the past, all the religious institutions that have played so large a part in the long life of man, have now been swept into the discard and are to become mere historical relics. It is widely

believed that the religion of the future is to cut loose entirely from religion as it has been, that it will begin its life anew as the "religion of science," or the "religion of social service," or the "religion of humanity."

Such a break is neither possible nor desirable. For we cannot forget that man is the heir of all the ages. "He is the heir of the poets of the past; their songs sing in his heart today. He is the heir of the artists of the past; their creative powers have beautified the world and constantly enlarged his vision. He is the heir of the inventors; his sense of mastery over the forces of nature comes from them. He is the heir of the great thinkers; his power of looking before and after comes from them. He is the heir of all the saints; their nobility and tenderness have quieted his passions and made him sensitive to suffering. And it is all this inheritance which lifts him immeasurably above the poor helpless creatures which he is exterminating or reducing to servants. There they are, akin to him in some degree and yet unable to climb to the heights to which brain and hand and social evolution have lifted him."

Our religious tradition has been builded by a long line of prophets and men of genius who have looked on suffering humanity and more or less clearly discerned a better way of life. Their insight has served generation after generation who in sweat and blood have moulded a human fabric that could sustain man's aspiration without driving him to despair. Around this experience has grown up a wealth

of poetic symbol and imaginative rendering, capable of awakening man's deepest loyalties and attaching him to noble ideals. To disregard this past, its achievements as well as its failures, to wipe the slate clean and start afresh, were it possible, would be to throw callously away all that through long centuries man has learned of spiritual and moral wisdom.

It is therefore of the utmost importance for the present reconstruction of the religious life that we recognize our spiritual continuity with the generations that have gone before. Those men too sought earnestly to relate themselves intelligently with the universe and their fellows. They too sought to interpret their experience in terms of moral and spiritual values. Their materials may not have been so rich as our own; but their problems were ultimately the same. So soon as we are delivered from the binding and literal authority of the ideas, beliefs, and institutions of the past, and are free to bring our fresh experience to bear on our inherited wisdom, we can enter into our legacy with new insight and appreciation. The bibles of the race, the theologies that thinkers have framed, the social organizations statesmen have created, as well as the literature, music, and art that have made imagination concrete, cease to be walls to shut in man's growing thought and expanding experience. They become instead rich sources of inspiration to achieve in our day and generation, in terms of our problems and thought, something spiritually akin to what other brave searchers for truth and vision have achieved. We

can thus enter into real spiritual communion with the past, and by relating older symbols to our own vital needs undertake once more the adventure on which our fathers embarked. When the past has ceased to lie like a heavy hand on our further advance, it can become for us the incentive to free inquiry and creative thinking. We can take our place in the van of those who have labored age after age to build a great tradition.

In these various ways religious men have sought to escape the morass of worldliness and attain to a spiritual mastery of life. They have looked to the good of their souls, and found it in devotion to an ideal end which was for them the one thing needful. Such devotion has sustained them in the face of sorrow, frustration, and moral failure. It has afforded an emotional adjustment to the necessary conditions of living. It has clothed itself in imaginative forms that have brought the aspiration for beauty to its aid, and have united the generations in the worship of common symbols for spiritual endeavor. In the past men have sought to strengthen that ideal end by identifying it with a Reality in the universe outside man. They have insisted that it was grounded in the Power that created Heaven and earth, and disposes of human life. They have made their own wills triumphant over warring impulse by subjecting them to an absolute Will. They have faced defeat and frustration in the confidence that that Will was good. "Make me a captive, Lord, and then I shall be free," has ever been the prayer on

the lips of the religious. "He who loses his life for my sake shall find it," said Jesus. In such paradoxes we see the truth that the highest peace and the deepest satisfaction come to men only when their lives are centered, not in what is best in their own attainment, but in that beyond all possible attainment which is better than their best. No one ever becomes aware of his deeper spiritual possibilities, no one ever awakens to the nature of his true self, until he has found some transcendent ideal to which he dedicates the best he has to give.

Such transcendence, such supernaturalism, is deeply grounded in the needs of human nature. It is the natural expression of the human craving for something in which the soul can rest at peace. There must be something transcendent, something that can withstand the shocks of daily experience, in the conviction by which man ultimately order their lives. It must be unshaken by passing waves of passion and shifting winds of doctrine. Such transcendence has in the past been gained by placing the highest good at the heart of cosmic power. This recourse to mythology is not possible for one who understands the best thought of today. For such a man, a transcendent good can find no place in a supernatural realm above or behind this world. It must be rooted in human nature and the natural setting in which it is placed. And yet, in some sense it must be set off from the lesser goods it orders, set off with a sanctity and insistence of its own. It must lift men above the little kingdom of the self to partic-

ipate in eternity. The wealth of metaphor lavished to describe this eternal good may give no information about existence elsewhere; but it does point to the deepest feelings of men in the presence of their supreme loyalty. How to reconcile the transcendence that sustains and inspires with the criticism that must be brought to bear on even the highest human ideal, is perhaps as yet an unsolved problem. Yet if we are sensitive to the most profound needs of man's spiritual experience, we must recognize that it is only when man does discover such a transcendent ideal to which he can surrender all his powers of mind and spirit, humbly, joyously, and in perfect confidence, that he achieves that inner unity of being which religion has called the blessedness and peace of God.

If religion is to meet successfully the spiritual challenge of this new age, it must not only set earnestly to work to formulate such a spiritual ideal for today; it must learn how to present it with such convincing power as to win men's whole-hearted and enthusiastic allegiance.

Chapter X

THE MORAL CHALLENGE

In every practical attempt to order the relations of man to man and group to group, there is at present confusion and uncertainty. In politics, in industry, in economic relations, in international affairs, in marriage, in the family, in religion,—everywhere alike men muddle through their immediate difficulties with little effort to grapple honestly and intelligently with the underlying problems. Mankind today is like a ship without a rudder. Its statesmen are seeking to direct its course without trustworthy chart or compass; its professed moral and religious teachers are for the most part but blind leaders of the blind. The few clear-visioned prophets who have glimpsed a distant beacon are given scant attention; it is perhaps as well, for no two of them see the same light.

This confused opportunism is not due to any lack of adequate knowledge about our social structure, or of effective techniques to direct it into new channels. Both knowledge and techniques are amply available to bring about a basic alteration in our institutions, as was convincingly shown when the war made the demand insistent. What is lacking is any clear ethical

standards for the ordering of human relationships, any accepted moral criteria to organize the values of life, at all adequate to the conditions of experience and the problems of conduct in our complex civilization. It needs no prophet to proclaim that the supreme moral task of religion in the twentieth century is the formulation of new ideals that can afford inspiration to master social relations and guidance to order them aright.

The scientific industrialism that is our world has a detailed knowledge of the processes of nature and of human society greatly exceeding that possessed by any previous civilization. It has the physical machinery and the techniques to produce a bewildering variety of material goods. It has the power to effect almost what it will in the means of living. Why is it that its fund of moral wisdom is so utterly inadequate? When moral leadership is needed as never before to control this power and guide this complex society, why is such leadership helpless, if not completely bankrupt? Why has the coming of industrialism paralysed the rich store of Hebrew and Christian ideals which is our rightful inheritance? Why has science seemed rather to destroy than to lend the support of effective knowledge to the moral idealism of our religious tradition? The Great War revealed clearly how completely the new forces were beyond men's control. Since then our ethical wisdom has appeared powerless to furnish either inspiration or guidance for the intelligent reconstruction of confused and broken institutions.

The truth is that for centuries our moral tradition has been slowly disintegrating. In the 13th century it could rightly claim to possess a clear pattern for the ordering of a complex society. Since then the commercial spirit has been steadily pushing in, demanding ever greater freedom to devote itself to the single end of material gain. Every element in the older moral ideals that could seriously conflict with untrammeled profit-seeking has been crowded aside as irrelevant to daily living. The Reformation brought religious consecration to the eager pursuit of business enterprise; the 18th century added the still surer sanction of nature and reason. The scientific spirit, so far as it has been felt—and its influence has been deepest on just those sensitive souls who might have offered guidance—has broken down any opposition to worldliness, and made difficult adherence to a transcendent spiritual ideal. The new insights that came in the 18th and 19th centuries were all negative. The moral prophets of the past two hundred years have preached liberty, toleration, national self-determination, and an individualistic democracy based on personal rights. From the Romantic era alone has come any insistence on the value of group coöperation and control; but the moral force that was inherited from those emotionally sensitive geniuses, political nationalism, was too hostile to intelligence to avoid capture by the dominant business spirit.

If the theological disintegration of the 19th century did not bring with it an attendant moral col-

lapse, it was chiefly because the Hebrew-Christian ethical tradition had already been stripped to the bone. The Reformation had already discarded otherworldly asceticism; the Puritan movement had cast aside the socialized ethics of medieval thought. The Age of Reason fell back on the central core of respect for the dignity and worth of human personality; but it formulated this democratic ideal in such abstract and negative terms that it was powerless to meet the novel encroachments of industrialism. The one element in the Christian moral code that persisted, the one ethical ideal that was emphasized in the popular religious revivals of the Romantic era, was the traditional repressive attitude toward the sexual urge. In abandoning the attempt to use material goods wisely or to order social relations, Puritanism concentrated on sexual purity. So exclusive has this emphasis been in Protestantism that to this day immorality has but one meaning for the average Protestant: it signifies any infringement of a narrow sexual code.

This sexual code was all that was left to feel the recent effects of industrial conditions and scientific analysis. Today it too is crumbling; freedom has triumphed over this last stronghold of moral discipline. And now the very core of respect for human personality has been assailed in theory by scientific thinking and in practice by industrial feudalism. It is little wonder that with only pious platitudes to fall back upon we find our moral wisdom insufficient for our needs.

The mores we actually practice today are the mores of ruthless personal ambition and economic striving. We fight for more and more power to amass material goods, as individuals and as nations. We have plunged into a pursuit of comforts and luxuries and sensual pleasures, with little but the watchword of freedom to guide the satisfaction of our impulses. When we resort to the diluted ideals of the past to dignify our conduct, it is to cheapen and degrade them. We fight a war to make the world safe for democracy; we conduct business in the spirit of Christian service. We have forgotten what it means to act as a spiritual being; we do not even comprehend what it is to be a rational animal. Most of the time we behave like more or less cunning beasts.

Traditional religious bodies have done little to counteract this disintegration of moral standards. Where orthodoxy is strong, it has succeeded for the time being in preserving something of the older sexual code and family loyalty. Judaism, whose religious life has from ancient times centered in the family circle, has perhaps shown greater vitality than any other tradition in maintaining its family code as an ideal really felt and followed. But aside from this one element, orthodoxy has acquiesced in the mores of today. Liberal religion has with certain notable exceptions gladly welcomed the fashionable moral opportunism. Its optimism, its enthusiasm for scientific attitudes, its domination by the middle class, have all blinded its eyes to the need for moral vision. For those idealistic liberals who refuse to see

the facts, or seeing, still seek support in the authority of tradition, there has been a characteristic retreat to a sentimental moral ideal that can have but little relevance to present-day needs.

The religious liberal who has been led to abandon the literal theological tradition, and who has come to see the utter insufficiency of traditional Protestant ethics, has taken his final stand on the "simple teachings of Jesus" as he finds them in the parables and the Sermon on the Mount. These he proclaims as the sure and sufficient standards for the moral life. All else may have been swept away; this at least remains.

Jesus was beyond question a truly great moral genius. Into many of the older teachings which he reiterated he put new meanings; to more than one profound moral problem he brought the illumination of new insight. More guidance, in fact, can be found in his treatment of specific moral difficulties than in the general principles of conduct which pass as the summation of his ethics. To love your neighbor as yourself and to do unto all men as you would they should do unto you, are after all rather profoundly moving incentives to search one's own heart than patterns for actual living. To suggest that the intricate and complicated problems of modern society can be solved by these abstract principles and by them alone, is to urge that the books of Euclid are a sufficient manual for the building of bridges and skyscrapers.

If progressive religion is to meet the challenge of

this modern age for a more adequate morality, it will have to face and answer frankly such questions as these: Have the ethical teachings of the great prophets of Israel, and especially of Jesus of Nazareth, to which liberals so confidently appeal, the stamp of finality? As they stand are they sufficient for the needs and problems of the 20th century, with its new outlook, its new conditions, and its new experiences? In a word, has Jesus spoken the last word in ethics? Modern thought is convinced of the relativity of truth in every other field of research. Is absolute certainty within its grasp in ethics? It is surely no disparagement of the greatness of Jesus' insight to recognize that there is not enough moral light at the command of men, that the vision enshrined in the sacred teachings of the past, precious as it is, and indispensable as a condition of further insight, is yet far from satisfying all the needs of the present.

It is just such mistaken trust in the final authority of Jesus in ethics that has kept liberal Christians from an effective grappling with the problems of moral reconstruction. Such liberals see clearly the disintegration of the social standards that sufficed Western civilization before the growth of the Great Society. They are vigorous in denouncing the inadequacy of the mores we actually practice today, the ideals we actually pursue. But they imagine that a satisfying alternative is to be found in the "teachings of Jesus;" this is the essence of Christianity, and this is our moral salvation. By their own admis-

sion they are turning to a set of standards that have nowhere been applied on a large scale; Christianity, they insist, has never yet been tried.

It is not that liberal Christians actually put into practice ethical and social ideals whose inadequacy is harmful. There is no danger that the teachings of Jesus will ever be applied on a large scale, or that they will ever dominate individual lives save in the case of a few literal-minded enthusiasts like Tolstoy, Gandhi or Bill Simpson. With these exceptions, those who are earnestly striving to make themselves and society "more Christian" are in reality falling back on the moral idealism inherited from a more recent ethical tradition. Though they may think they are following in the Master's footsteps, they are actually finding their guidance elsewhere, and clothing it in the authority of the Gospels. The Prophet of Nazareth would doubtless be much surprised at the social gospel liberals claim to have derived from him. The danger of looking to Jesus as the final moral authority lies not in what men find in his teachings, but in what they do not find. They imagine that those teachings are sufficient in themselves, and therefore disregard the other elements in our moral traditions, the Greek insistence on the intelligent mastery of the means of living, the medieval vision of a functionally integrated group life, that might afford additional insight for our problems. Instead of examining all the moral wisdom of which we are the heirs, and searching earnestly for still further light in which that wisdom might be re-

constructed, liberal Christians fall back on the uncriticized secular ideals of today, and blind themselves to their insufficiency by attaching to them the authority of Jesus' name. Before most liberals can hope to face frankly the problems of moral reconstruction, they must rid themselves of the idea that it is enough to seek to embody in our social order the ethical precepts of Jesus.

It has already been pointed out how those precepts fail to meet the demands of present-day philosophical thinking and social problems. It is well to recapitulate, however, just why the Jesus whom modern research has placed in his social environment, while he stands out as a supreme ethical teacher, perhaps the greatest in our tradition, is not able to offer completely adequate moral guidance for today. Did the Jesus history has revealed have a sufficient interest in the materials with which modern men must work, and are his teachings clearly related to the kind of life men are obliged to lead under the conditions of a scientific industrialism?

Most of the materials out of which our society must create a good life were unknown to Jesus. We are already living by scientific thought; we must bring much more of it into our lives. The scientific method and spirit are part of the intellectual faith of all intelligent men. Our society has tapped reservoirs of physical power, and turned it to the multiplication of material goods. Our culture is wealthy in its artistic traditions; it is devoted to literature, the drama, painting, and music. But there was no

science for Jesus, nor had the notion of natural law, or the search for knowledge, even begun to enter the spirit of his age. For him neither the form, the spirit, nor the fruits of scientific inquiry existed. Similarly, he had no interest in the artistic pursuits of a complicated society. Above all, he had no inkling of the power over nature that technology was to bring, or the variety of instruments for living that it would create. These are the conditions of our life; somehow we must fit them into an ordered and satisfying harmony. Jesus could of necessity see neither these building stones, nor the very problems their wise utilization presents.

It is even more important to note that Jesus had no interest in utilizing the materials which his own society presented. Farming, trading, the simple arts and crafts of Palestine,—he said nothing that shows he realized the dignity and value of these forms of life. He does not seem to have thought the moral worth of men bore any relation to the service they performed in society. Civilized existence brings care, involves the feeling of responsibility, presents problems no one can shirk; and yet Jesus taught men to be as free from care as are the sparrows of the air and the lilies of the field. But we are neither birds nor flowers; nor does any man seriously believe that we could abandon if we would the varied activities and goods of a complex culture. They do not form the whole of life, nor yet its core; but their ordering and mastery present problems not faced by Jesus, nor illuminated by his insight.

Jesus counseled, "Sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor." This was surely a poetic symbol; yet it faces the real moral problem of neither the rich man nor the poverty-stricken. He taught that it was preferable not to marry. He placed the premium on those who "made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake;" he exalted the virtue of celibacy. He forbade divorcing a wife even though it was impossible to live with her. For the wife there was no redress under any circumstances. He taught that a man should foresake father and mother, brother and sister, wife and children, for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Does any intelligent man believe that these are adequate solutions for our times?

What was his attitude toward political problems? "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." This cannot but seem to us a begging of the whole question; our need is to know what are the things that do belong to Caesar. Has the state the right to the unquestioned allegiance of its citizens when it asks what is contrary to conscience and conviction? "Resist not evil." What would become of the earnest endeavor to eradicate wrongs and injustices if Christians took seriously this injunction? Our society has a perplexing abundance of goods, material and spiritual, to order; it has complex relations to adjust; it has pressing evils to overcome. It demands intelligence and education to deal with all these materials and adjustments. Jesus said nothing of

education; he placed the supreme emphasis on the heart, and he seems to have had no notion of the duty of developing to the utmost the powers of the mind.

The moral precepts of Jesus show little concern with what have become the necessary conditions of human existence today. The disinterested investigations of the scientist, the thinking of the philosopher, the art of the painter, the sculptor, the writer, the dramatist, the poet, the musician, the practice of one's vocation, the perpetuation and education of the race through family life, the devotion of marriage, political and economic reorganization, industrial democracy, popular education, the readjustment of woman's life, international coöperation,—to all these vital concerns of today the words and practices of Jesus are either irrelevant, or profoundly out of harmony with the convictions of modern men. There is not one of these forms of our life in which Jesus can be imitated, or his words obeyed literally, without the downfall of the whole structure of modern civilization.

The teachings of Jesus are intelligible only in the light of his belief in the supernatural Messiah and the cataclysmic coming of the Kingdom of God. If this world is so soon to cease, if God is to create a new heaven and a new earth, a man may well distribute his possessions among the poor, he may refrain from marrying, he may forsake his family, he may cease to resist evil. What matter such things if the old world is to disappear and the Messiah establish

his reign upon earth? Such extremist morality is an interim morality; it has no concern with what is to pass away. To such a view, the future of society is a matter of indifference. Society has no future; the end of the world is at hand. To accumulate goods, to advance science and art, to change social conditions, to improve the tools of our toil, even to multiply and replenish the earth,—these are morally irrelevant to the imminent catastrophe.

Liberal Christians have not liked to admit the eschatological element in the teachings of Jesus. They preferred to attribute to him the fruit of their own experience that the world did not come to an end. Yet such teachings are certainly present in the Gospels. It is difficult to attribute them entirely to the first generation of disciples who set down the record; for they alone make the ethical attitude of Jesus intelligible. But there was no end; how then is a system of ethics based on an imminent catastrophe to be applied to a world whose conditions are precisely the opposite? There is much insight in the thought of Jesus that preserves an eternal validity; but in the very nature of the case, the ethical problems we must face are the problems of a world that is growing constantly more complex in its human relationships, and offering an increasing wealth of material that must be wrought into the good life.

It is not that the ethics of Jesus are false; it is rather that to turn to them for final authority means the abandonment of search for the additional insight necessary for our transformed world. As they

stand, they reveal no way to make the world and the flesh instrumental to the spirit in man; historically they have tended to turn men away from the world and its concerns, to abandon in despair the problem of human living in human society. It is amazing how many still believe that a general formula like the Golden Rule can suffice to straighten out all the ethical tangles of a complex industrial society, or that the conceptions of justice enunciated by Hebrew prophets for a simple peasant folk twenty-five hundred years ago are calculated to present the intricate and detailed social guidance men are today struggling to work out.

The critical problems and pressing needs that confront us insistently demand new ethical formulations and fresh insight. We cannot ignore this challenge. It is peculiarly the task of religion to furnish new moral inspiration. But we shall not discover it by reducing our moral heritage to a single element. We must draw on all the wisdom that the past affords, not merely that of the Hebrew prophets, even of the greatest of them. Yet all the past offers is not enough. We must resolutely face the moral problems of today and work them out for ourselves; we can find no short cut to their solution by turning back to an age forever gone. To attempt to use sentimental attachment to the words of Jesus as a final answer to our problems is to make of them a substitute for serious examination and thoughtful reformulation.

We must work out an ethic that will teach us the wise use of the new powers industrialism has brought

to our society. To abandon these material opportunities in disgust, as the sensitive and spiritually minded are often tempted, is to leave them to the exploitation of the callous and worldly. We cannot afford to flee the world and the flesh; we must endeavor to master them. The machine is making possible a gradual release from long hours of servile toil and the more irksome forms of labor; here are new opportunities of leisure presented for the development of the human spirit, provided intelligence is brought to bear on their proper utilization. Still more imperative is an ethic that shall make man, whether employer or employee, the master rather than the slave of the machine, that shall lift him above the tyranny of things, and set him free to use these riches of industrialism to enhance human life, not to standardize and mechanize his every impulse.

We must face seriously the ethical reconstruction of the sexual life. Last of all the older standards, traditional sexual attitudes are today breaking down. Modern conditions have made impossible the continued dominance of the male; we are reveling in a more or less scientific analysis of the sexual urge. The old rigid repression has gone; freedom and experimentation, usually far from intelligent, have as yet furnished no clear pattern to take its place. Men and women are seeking love where they may find it, with little serious thought for the consequences. They are convinced that the old mores were mere conventions; they are told that every individual should be a law unto himself. In relations where a

misstep is fraught with incalculable spiritual pain, they follow the promptings of impulse and passion. Nowhere is a serious exploration of the deepest possibilities of experience more needed than here. What are the necessary conditions of the highest attainment? How can the family be ordered in modern society to bring the richest spiritual fruits? Here if anywhere is need for a worthy ethical ideal.

To a degree unknown in simpler societies, the fortunes of civilization have come to depend on the interactions of organized groups. Trade acts upon trade, class upon class, party upon party, church upon church, state upon state,—all are caught up in a complex network of group relations. The very scale of such group action is unprecedented. This enormous increase in the variety and range of group activity is due to the coming of industrial organization into a democratic society, to the permeation of social groups by the democratic spirit. The individual moral agent is involved in a host of often conflicting groupings that determine his opportunities for action and regulate his life. But while democratic industrial society has thus multiplied the number and importance of group activities, it has failed to create the moral standards by which group relations may be ordered. In most cases the actions of the individual are more consciously directed by ethical standards than are those of the groups in which he participates.

The activities of groups are fraught with far-reaching moral consequences both for their own

members and for other groups. At the same time, it is in the field of group action that least attention is paid to the further bearings of policies and actions. This condition becomes more pronounced as we proceed from lesser to greater groups; in the field of international relations any intelligent guidance that goes beyond the immediate interest of the moment is almost non-existent.

The profound moral challenge to religion is to create a morality for group action that shall not content itself with opportunistic self-seeking. Men must come to realize the consequences of group policies lightly undertaken, on themselves and on other men. They must bestow the same care in tracing out the effects of group action, and in choosing thoughtfully between alternatives, that the more conscientious now expend on personal moral deliberation. They must explore the ideal possibilities resident in the activities of their groups, and adjust them to each other and to the ends of other groups. The structure of social groupings is usually closely limited by material and economic conditions; but within those limits there is room for the formulation of a more adequate group pattern that will release the spiritual energies of man. Such a moral enterprise can hardly set itself any static structure, any fixed Utopia, as a goal; but it can work towards the most fruitful coöperation of all groups in the achievement of a common purpose that shall mean the highest good of human society. "On vested interests that dare not put themselves to the hazard; on groups that have

rights, but no duties; on 'systems' that make things easy all around; on institutions that play for safety; on democracies that put their trust in majority voting, these challengers must not smile." In a truly civilized world, the morality of group activity would become the highest morality known to man. And it is this new morality that religion must search after and endeavor to consecrate.

In the world into which we have come, the new means of communication devised by science have annihilated space, and brought all nations and races of men into one physical neighborhood. The rise and spread of industrialism has created the Great Society, in which men are bound together by a thousand new economic ties that had no existence a century ago. The new knowledge men have gained of other races and peoples is fast breaking down the old walls of ignorance and prejudice, and bringing a new understanding and appreciation of the cultural life and ideals of peoples no longer alien. The supreme task of the 20th century, growing clearer and more insistent with the passing of every day, is, in the words of John Dewey, "the task of transforming this great new society into the great world community."

This involves new attitudes—the creation in the place of our present provincialisms of the international mind, the bringing to birth of a world-consciousness, more inclusive than our present narrow nationalistic consciousness, the conception of a functional society in which our present divided polit-

ical, economic, social, and religious groups, competing and warring fragments of humanity, shall at length be brought together in a coöperative commonwealth of groups and nations. In the kind of world into which we have come, the spiritual principle must be "all for each and each for all."

In a world setting its face more or less vaguely toward a kind of unity in the life of races and nations that has not yet existed on this planet, that is seeking more or less blindly a way toward a kind of coöperation in the life of men and nations never known in the past, that is groping for a new understanding and appreciation of other peoples and races, religion must dare to challenge the nations as nations to rise to a higher level of morality in their relations with one another. It must hold before men the vision of a civilization that has subordinated the quarrelsome work of exploiting the material world to the coöperative labor of developing the spirit of man; that has made the material values of riches and power serve to release the moral and spritual values latent in human nature. It must impel men to seek to transform the nations into institutions for helping their citizens to live the good life in coöperation with all mankind.

If religion is to play any real part in developing this new morality, it must possess the courage and ability to do creative thinking in the field of morals. Accepting gratefully all the moral insight and inspiration the past can furnish, it must recognize that "new occasions teach new duties." No ethical

teacher of the past, however great, has uttered the final word in morals. Man's moral experience grows and expands as does his intellectual experience. What more than anything else is holding religion back just now, is its unthinking enslavement to the letter rather than the spirit of the ethical teachings of a bygone age.

Religion must welcome the light that scientific philosophies are throwing on human relations. It must recognize the necessity of critical and creative intelligence in the moral life. It must respect all the honest experiments that high-minded men undertake. Though many of them may lead down blind alleys, it is only thus that fresh insight into human relations can be obtained. Such experiments must be carried on, not rashly and in ignorance of the moral wisdom of the past, but in the light and at the suggestion of the best knowledge that men have accumulated in the adventure of living. Yet in the last analysis, the moral life is founded on a surer basis than any experiment, however wisely administered. In all human living there must be an ultimate conviction, a supreme standard by which lesser goods are judged. This final touchstone is embodied in the core of a moral tradition, and slowly alters as the line of prophets bring to it their ethical insight. Around it religion throws its authority; to it men's deepest emotions are firmly attached. The core of the Hebrew-Christian moral tradition is faith in the sacredness of the spiritual nature of every man. Interpretations may change, fresh insight may be added,

further perception may come with new knowledge and new experience. The scientific theories of today may not recognize it, the grinding of economic forces may disregard it. But it is deeply embedded in the heart of our religious life; and in the face of all the shocks of readjustment, religion will consecrate this faith, and insistently demand that somehow intelligence fit it into our lives.

Chapter XI

THE CHALLENGE TO FAITH

It must be clear from what has gone before that it is a mistake to look to religion to solve all the perplexities and difficulties of life, whether intellectual or moral. The solution of problems, so far as that be possible, must be the work of intelligence operating critically upon the meanings and significances which experience reveals, the thoughtful manipulation of the materials of living in the light of insight into its values. Religion offers no solutions of its own; it expresses and consecrates the more or less integrated pattern of life which men have painfully achieved. Religion will bring our perplexities to a focus, it will direct them upon a distant goal. It will reveal in one clear and burning vision the depth of the mystery that confronts mortal man. Let science continue to throw ever new light on the secrets of the universe; let it disentangle facts from their context and order them into an imaginative synthesis by appropriate symbols. There still remains the insistent call to create an enduring edifice of beauty and justice to which man's spirit will forever respond. But in transfiguring our difficulties through flaming vision, religion liberates

within us courage and faith, two qualities that spring from a single root. In revealing the world as a precarious scene in which the soul of man can yet create peace, and life as a great adventure in which, amid uncertainties and dangers, there can yet be found a sure direction, religion inspires the heroic spirit that is alone worthy to live in such a world. It assigns us a rôle which puts us constantly on our mettle, but it gives also the spiritual power equal to the challenge and strong to rejoice in it.

Pain and suffering, frustration and defeat, religion cannot remove, for these experiences are woven into the very texture of life. But it can quicken a spirit within us that is more than master over these things. And when courage and faith have won the victory at the moment of supreme trial, thus establishing themselves as the ruling powers of the soul, it can turn these qualities back upon life as a whole, to interpenetrate its elements with their dynamic energy, to liberate new capacities and meanings, and so fill the world with beauty and significance and joy. For faith, rightly understood and properly exercised, is the very core of religion. But what is faith, and what are its appropriate objects? While faith is an indispensable quality of living, without which life is confused and drifting, there have been many forms of faith associated with religion in the past that are both intellectually and morally impossible for the intelligent today.

Faith is surely not to be confused with credulity. We are moved by the unquestioning trust of the

child; in the child it is beautiful and touching. Yet such credulity, born of ignorance and inexperience, is unworthy of respect when adolescence is passed. Many a man remains all his life in the unthinking and unquestioning attitude of childhood faith; his frame of mind reflects the opinions and beliefs of his early associates. He has never sought by earnest inquiry to find the true basis and real nature of a mature faith. True faith must grow out of intelligence, and build upon it; it cannot rest in ignorance.

There are those inclined to boast of their blind faith, as if there were something heroic in clinging desperately to unexamined conviction against all odds. In truth, such men lack the mental energy or the moral courage to see their faith as it really is; they fear that such a frank facing of realities may lead to unsettling doubts. But a faith so easily unsettled is no faith worthy the name, and deserves to be lost. The faith that silences all doubts makes no appeal to our generation; for men have reached the conviction that honest inquiry and constant questioning is the only sure foundation for a worthy faith. There is nothing so hoary with age or so sacred with the luster of past devotion that it can silence the spirit that searches and examines.

We must rule out also the naïve definition of the young theological student, that faith is the faculty that enables one to believe what he knows is not so. For many a divided mind faith has come to be just such a determination.

Most insidious of all errors is the common practice of confounding faith with some particular form of belief. Beliefs are variable, they are the imperfect and constantly changing symbols of a truth that forever eludes our grasp, while faith is the inner power by which we forever pursue more adequate beliefs. Belief is the body of the intellect, while faith is its soul, its unceasing activity. In their very nature beliefs must be provisional, hypothetical, suggestive; while faith denotes the set and drive of the whole man toward truth and life that persists despite all intellectual change.

True faith can not be divorced from reason. There have always been two very different types of religious faith in the world. These are well illustrated in the lives and teachings of two of the early Fathers of the Christian church, Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria. Tertullian held that religious faith had nothing to do with reason, that faith was essentially irrational. The greater the contradiction between faith and reason, the more he gloried in his faith. To him faith was a deposit of belief delivered once and for all to the saints, to be preserved in its letter from age to age. New knowledge might be gained, truths might be multiplied, the social environment might be totally transformed, but this necessitated the changing of no jot or tittle of his beliefs. Tertullian's faith was a static thing, to be preserved *in toto* as final truth against the impact of all conceivable new ideas.

To Clement, however, faith was very different.

It was not a fixed set of beliefs, to be maintained in crystallized form. It was open-mindedness and receptivity toward truth, from whatever source it might be derived. It involved the recognition that new knowledge must always enter into the experience of man, and that this new knowledge must be welcomed by faith. Clement believed therefore that faith was a constantly growing and expanding thing, that every widening of experience, every enlarging of ideas, meant only deeper and broader faith. He saw faith, not as divorced from or contradictory to reason, but as employing reason to the full limits of its powers, and then peering beyond, as it were, into realms that reason had not yet entered, adventuring into regions of ideals, values, and meanings, irrelevant to science. Hence faith to Clement was not static but active, the great energizing power of life. The moment it ceased to seek for more truth it ceased to be a living faith, and religion died. To Tertullian, faith was ever looking backward; to Clement, faith was ever looking forward and moving on to assimilate new knowledge. Tertullian's mind was closed to free investigation. Clement's was open to the fullest and freest investigation possible. Tertullian today would be leading the cohorts of orthodoxy, while Clement would be pointing the way along which liberals must advance. Beyond question, it is Clement's conception of faith, not Tertullian's, that possesses vital meaning for modern thought.

Still more explicitly, religious faith cannot amid our problems consist in the literal imitation, intel-

lectual or moral, of even the greatest leaders of the past. Our faith can discover moral inspiration in the prophets of old, but it cannot be bound to any slavish following of those who, however stirring their lives or however penetrating their insight, lived in the face of a vastly different social experience and possessed but a tithe of our verified knowledge. We cannot by faith accept any religious genius of ages gone as the complete and sufficient example for our thought or conduct.

In the last place, religious faith cannot consist for us in any final external authority, whether of Bible, creed, or church, apart from our actual living experience. These elements of the religious life, properly understood, are of inestimable utility. But they do not furnish the sure basis for a vital faith, nor do they possess the right to limit the freedom of the human spirit in its search for fresh insight.

What, then, is the faith by which we can and must live? In the classic definition of Paul, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The two parts of this definition are usually supposed to be supplementary. But as a matter of fact they present two radically different conceptions of faith; and the attempt to bring them together leads to all the vagaries and confusions of popular religious thought. Each of these different conceptions has played an important part in the long traditions of the past; both are recurrent in the controversies of the present. Faith may be either the substance of things hoped for, or the evidence of

things not seen; it makes a very real difference which conception we adopt.

"Faith is the evidence of things not seen." If faith be regarded as a type of evidence, then it is inevitably made the basis of definite beliefs and doctrines which can find no other rational support. It lends authority to formulated creeds that lack confirmation in experience. It is such a conception of faith that underlies all creedal religions, a faith that offers independent evidence for the truth of theological beliefs. Faith is thus identified with literal adherence to doctrine and tenet. Such a formulated faith assumes for those who hold it the value of knowledge,—of a different kind, it may be, but of a higher quality than knowledge gained from other sources. These doctrines appear to the believer to contain inspired or revealed truth which should take precedence over all other knowledge. Sometimes the truth of faith is regarded as not of itself irrational, although beyond the reach of rational inquiry; sometimes, as in the famous dictum of Tertullian, *"Credo quia absurdum,"* the truth of faith is intensified by its contradiction to the truths of rational experience.

The fruits of this faith whose content of beliefs can never change just because they have been elevated above all possibility of verification or criticism, must be evident. Such a faith always divides and never unites men. Every authoritative creed cuts its adherents off from the rest of the world to live a life by themselves. The tragic religious divisions in every civilization spring in large measure from identifying

faith with traditional beliefs, rather than with devotion to the search for the truth that sets men free. Again, the conception that faith is a form of evidence always tends to divorce it from reason; often it leads men to force themselves to believe what is not only irrelevant to but also in contradiction with other sources of truth. In the name of religion it brings about the destruction of the integrity of the intellectual and moral life; it sets one part of the mind over against another in insoluble conflict. Lastly, to conceive faith as evidence tends to divorce religion from life by enshrining faith in a creed to be repeated in church on Sunday, instead of embodying it in daily experience with one's fellows.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for." The contrast is obvious. In this second conception of faith we pass from the world of postulates to that of possibilities, from foundations to goals, from beliefs to ends in view, from convictions to aspirations, from evidence to things hoped for. Postulates, foundations, beliefs, convictions, and evidence are essential and necessary, but they must not be confused with the substance of a living faith. Such faith consists in the willingness to pursue untiringly the things for which we hope. It is the power by which we seek daily to translate possibilities into realities.

In so far then as religion is a life of faith, it is more like a search for something that is missing, something glimpsed but not attained, something of which we have received intimations but that still lies beyond us in the dim distance, than it is like a defini-

tive system of beliefs about something revealed in the past. In Judaism and Christianity the word "God" has stood for many things that must seem to us to lie in the realm of poetry and imaginative myth; but among them all it has served the truly religious as the symbol for the objects of faith. If we take God as such a symbol, we may employ traditional language to say that a vital religion is concerned not so much to find evidence for the existence of God as to seek a God who now appears to hide his face. To accept what others in the past have uttered of their own experiences in this religious search, is a very different thing from pursuing it ourselves. Every age must find its own God, for the gods of the past will never suffice for the needs of the present. True faith is not evidence for the existence of the unseen, but willingness to search for that which we hope some day to meet face to face. To paraphrase the familiar words of Lessing, if God were to offer us in one hand faith as the evidence of the unseen, and in the other, faith as the search for what we hope one day to see, we would take the search; for in that quest lies the savor and tang of living, through that search we gain the discipline that renders us worthy of that for which we hope.

What are some of the possible objects of such a faith amid the intellectual and social conditions of the present? What do we mean by faith in humanity? Do we not mean the faith that in every man there lies the possibility of developing higher capacities, the moral and spiritual qualities of character?

We have no actual evidence that such energies exist latent in all men. In the lives of the great majority there is no proof or indication; more often than not our experience with human nature as it is seems to point to the contrary. Yet we shrink from denying potentialities of higher things to even the most degraded brute of a man; we know that we could not remain true to our own best nature if we did treat him as the beast he seems to be. We may be wrong in this faith; it may turn out that mankind as a whole is utterly incapable of learning to control the savage that dwells in human nature. But we still dare to affirm that this surface animality is not all, that latent capacities are present in man's nature; and to that faith we dedicate our renewed efforts to call them forth.

What do we mean by faith in democracy? Certainly not that we believe that democracy now exists in any region of life, or that it could exist in any of the forms under which it has been conceived. The slow growth of the democratic spirit has in these last few years received many a serious check. Emperors and kings may have been swept away by the war, but the old autocracy has reappeared in new dictatorships; and there is the inescapable feudalism of our industrial order. Psychology has brought to light new facts that challenge the old arguments; social science has made plain the inadequacy of all present forms of democratic organization. For many thoughtful minds the very democratic ideal itself has grown tawdry and faded. And yet, though de-

mocracy does not exist, though the means for its embodiment elude us, though its truth is apparent to no experiment, we dare to continue to place our faith in the democratic ideal. We hope that by our unflagging efforts, and with the aid of the social intelligence released by our newer sciences of man and society, true democracy may find an increasing embodiment in the life of mankind.

What do we mean by faith in social justice? Surely not that we believe on the ground of evidence that social justice now exists. The masses of men in every land are either suffering in dumb resignation countless forms of injustice and oppression, or are else struggling more or less ineffectively for a justice now denied. To many the injustice of our industrial civilization seems eternally rooted in the very nature of things, seems to spring from the unchanging spirit of greed and selfishness. To be sure, certain abuses are from time to time remedied; but those maladjustments of human relations we know as injustice are bound to persist in spite of all generous reforming efforts. And yet our faith, based not on evidence that is now seen, but on the hope of what may one day appear, leads us to work and sacrifice for the coming of more justice into the collective life of man. Not to do so would be to deny the deepest urge of our own age, inherited from generations of prophets who are gone. We may be deceiving ourselves in these hopes; it may turn out that injustice and maladaptation are part of the fabric of human life. Yet our scientific and social philosophies are seeking val-

iantly to bring more intelligence to bear on the ordering of the great forces struggling in our society; and we still dare to labor in the living faith that some day, through intelligence and will, a scientific industrialism will attain a social organization that will not cause so much suffering and pain.

What do we mean by faith in a new world order—the faith that stirs the heart and quickens the mind in every nation today, and that may make the twentieth century a significant turning-point in the history of humanity? War has not succeeded in destroying war, as was so naïvely hoped; it has only inflamed the spirit of militarism and violence. The rulers of nations still pin their faith to armies and navies, to aircraft and poison bombs, to force and violence. The causes that breed wars have been multiplied a hundredfold. Leagues of Nations, World Courts, Peace Pacts, have raised new hopes; but nothing is clearer than that they are of themselves powerless, mere pious gestures, unless the causes from which wars inevitably spring can be effectively directed into other channels. To the grim realist our hopes of an ordered world, in which the international anarchy that has prevailed shall be replaced by an international coöperation for the well-being of all nations and peoples, seem woven of the thin and tenuous substance of dreams. It may turn out that the realist is right. It may be true that in this world warfare will always exist, that men will never learn a better way, that nations will never achieve the intelligence or the will to create order

out of present chaos. They may never learn how to subordinate their belligerent spirit to the life of co-operative good-will. And yet, in spite of all the forbidding evidence that exists, we dare to espouse the faith that an ordered world is possible, a world in which great cultural ends shall at length replace in the life of nations the old ends of domination and greed and war.

What do we mean by faith in life as a whole, by religious faith in the full sense of the term?

"If religion, in so far as it consists of such faith, has any vitality, it is because life fundamentally is problematic or adventurous. Even to an adult, life presents itself as a 'big, blooming, buzzing confusion,' for we are all caught up in movements of whose outcomes we are ignorant; we find ourselves groping more or less blindly in an alien world. One may, if one chooses, take these facts as final and regard life as just that medley of order and chaos, of unity and diversity, of harmony and strife, of ignorance and knowledge, which we discover it to be. One may regard it as a farce in which we play silly rôles, or perhaps, if it seems to possess dignity, as a tragedy in which we battle against fate, or even, if one possesses sufficient imagination, as a *divina commedia*. There is no refuting such philosophies. But, on the other hand, life may challenge our intellect as well as our imagination, and we may find life radically adventurous. We may look upon ourselves as embarked on a voyage of discovery. We may entertain hopes and act upon them. We may

make demands on life; we may exercise faith. But such faith, precisely because it makes demands on life and is radically adventurous, guarantees nothing. It takes a risk; it undertakes a search for something which *may* possibly never be found." [1]

Yet faith in mere living is not enough. Man has need of a faith that goes beyond the search for the adventurous savor of existence; to promote life he must value something other than mere life. He must look upon the sure goods of experience, not merely as what they are, to be striven for and enjoyed; he must see in them the possibilities of more abundant goods that as yet have no existence. He must select and discriminate, and perfect in imagination what is imperfect in fact. Carefully choosing his materials, he must reconstruct a world that is not the scene of precarious chance, but is transfigured by the light of imagination, completing what is fragmentary, bringing into harmony what is discordant, excluding what is refractory. Such a world of poetic creation is not the rough and harsh mixture of good and evil we know as fact; it is not a life that could withstand the shocks of rude existence. It is human experience purified and recast in the crucible of imaginative vision, —an experience that has laid off the garments of time to partake of eternity.

"Those who best promote life do not have life for their purpose. They aim rather at what seems like a gradual incarnation, a bringing into our human existence of something eternal, something that ap-

[1] H. W. Schneider, *Faith,* in *Journal of Philosophy,* vol. XXI, p. 39.

pears to imagination to live in a heaven remote from strife and failure and the devouring jaws of Time. Contact with this eternal world—even if it be only a world of our imagining—brings a strength and a fundamental peace which cannot be wholly destroyed by the struggles and apparent failures of our temporal life. It is this happy contemplation of what is eternal that Spinoza calls the intellectual love of God. To those who have once known it, it is the key of wisdom. By contact with what is eternal, by devoting ourselves to bringing something of the Divine into this troubled world, we make our own lives creative even now, even in the midst of the cruelty and strife and hatred that surround us on every hand." [1]

Mythology has ever misunderstood this realm of eternal perfection. It has felt that here was a window opening onto Reality, that all our actual life was but a fragmentary imitation of what existed in its own right as supremely true and good. But eternity is a quality of human vision, not a description of authentic being; and perfection is no attribute of any existence, but experience clarified and made whole by the spirit of man. Men have been prone to live in the ideal rather than by it; they have hoped that flesh and blood might inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Instead of plotting their course by the pole star, they have sought by magic to attain it. They have looked to faith for news of heaven, rather than for light upon the geography of earth.

[1] Bertrand Russell, *Why Men Fight,* p. 268.

Yet all human living turns to some vision that seems eternal. The scientist may be convinced of the tentative and provisional nature of the truth he has formulated; he may realize that criticism and rebuilding of the edifice of scientific verity will never cease. Yet he would not passionately pursue the precarious labor of serious thinking, did he not feel the impelling power of a truth beyond what he has discovered, beyond what he may ever hope to create. The moral prophet, the apostle of a juster social order, may in moments of meditation admit that his programs and plans are transitory and passing; he may even see that his basic convictions of righteousness and justice will be transformed in the light of insight as yet undreamed. Yet he would not insistently proclaim our present life wrong and unjust, did he not catch the vision of a spiritual ideal beyond the possibility of all attainment, yet inescapable in its command to attain.

It is such vision in eternity, such a conviction of the more that is greater than all fact, greater even than the spirit can penetrate, that satisfies the needs of men for consolation and strength. It is enough for them to have seen, and to have glimpsed a perspective that they could not exhaust. To struggle and labor, after such contact with eternal vision, to face failure and frustration with courage and fortitude, is to attain to spiritual peace. Nay, it is frustration itself that kindles the very aspiration toward what is impossible of attainment because it is irrelevant to the limitations of mortal life. Thus out of the very

jaws of defeat the soul of man wrests victory; for in disaster finite ends are revealed in their finitude, and man sees himself as spirit, with a vision that can transcend the bourne of time and space and the petty conditions of existence.

For religious men this object of faith and vision has been conceived as God. The ultimate to which faith aspired, the ultimate that eluded definition and yet was shadowed forth in existence, was divine. Myth elaborated this Divinity, the imagination made it concrete and gave it the attributes of human life. Those goods which particular societies or ages most cherished were made the enduring possessions of a deity. God was the loving father of mankind, for the love of the human father for his offspring seemed the highest value that experience made manifest. Magic forged links by which this Divinity could be brought near to man to succor him in his troubles and sustain him in his weakness. The philosophic theologian has always recognized that here were symbols, concrete imagery, appeals to the emotion, concessions to popular imagination. The wisest theologies have always insisted that the face of God remained veiled to mortality, and his ways past finding out. The Being to whom men prayed and looked for inspiration was clothed in the imagery of human good and human perfection, imagery that has of necessity changed from age to age with man's enlarging experience.

In ancient India Divinity was for the sages the One that the mind of man differentiated into the

many. In more theistic religions, Divinity has been individualized and personalized; it is conceived as the masculine, monarchical ruler of the universe. In early Judaism, God was a heavenly King; in Christianity, our Father in Heaven; in Islam, the supreme Sultan. God has been the Logos, the rational ideality of the universe; he has been the Final Cause, the end to which the whole creation moves. In our more modern life notions of Divinity have reflected our insistence on the worth of a society of free personalities; thus Felix Adler, for example, sets the Divine forth as "a multiple God, a democratic, spiritual commonwealth, an infinite organism of spirits; each human being in his or her essential selfhood is an infinitesimal but indispensable part of the Infinite God." Theologies and philosophies have varied; they have drawn on the scientific concepts in which their age tried to interpret its life. In our own tradition Divinity has been conceived in the substantial terms of Greek thought; that which is highest has been taken as authentic Being, set over against the being that was less real. The philosophies of today have ceased to employ such substantial concepts; for them, Divinity is a quality to be discriminated in experience, a quality of the human vision that sees beyond finite experience into the perfected and eternal realm of the imagination. Yet that which the spirit selects and idealizes as divine is inescapably real; it is Nature herself coming to a complete realization of her suggested possibilities in the soul of man. The scientific philosophies of our day will give way to

others; our concepts and our symbols will pass. But Divinity will remain, so long as human nature sustains its life in the universe, as the object of man's highest faith.

The concepts in which Divinity has been made intelligible have also reflected in the past a philosophic interpretation of the course of nature. God has been the Power behind the universe, as well as the ideal in the heart of man. Even today attempts are made to find him in some concept of scientific explanation, in evolution, in cosmic energy. Our contemporary philosophies bid us renounce the effort as vain. So long as man was himself divorced from Nature, there was genuine need to find such a natural foundation for his highest loyalty. But when man has been placed at the heart of the natural order, what is in his life most real becomes also most real in Nature. There is no longer need to run the risk of degrading man's notion of the highest, of sacrificing Perfection to cosmic power. Divinity is indeed in Nature, enshrined in man's activities as her highest manifestation.

If we take the word "God" as the symbol of man's supreme allegiance, whatever else it may signify in our thoughtful interpretation of experience, then faith in God may mean faith in the possibility of sharing ever more fully this vision of the highest perfection. Such faith involves the hope that capacities for the fullest development are resident in all men, and the hope that by faith and intelligent efforts we can liberate more of these capacities in the life

of mankind. For this modern age, faith in Divinity is not the belief that a substantial God exists in some physical heaven, nor is it the knowledge that theology has professed as to the rule of God over the course of nature. Faith in Divinity is the hope that men may see more clearly the ideal possibilities of human life, and, seeing, reweave the tangled fabric of their lives.

"Faith is not only adventurous, it is also blind. The account of faith as a kind of evidence gives faith an independent intellectual function, and there is a common notion that by faith we know God. By faith we know nothing. By faith we are engaged in a search, the search for the gods, let us say, but only by intelligence may we ever find them. The search begins in darkness. We know not where lies our salvation nor whither we should turn. But intelligence discovers pointers from time to time, which makes the search not wholly blind. We must feel our way. Our intelligence is, in the words of Santayana,

> a torch of smoky pine
> That lights the pathway but one step ahead
> Across a void of mystery and dread.

In such a precarious situation it is a great temptation to

> Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
> By which alone the mortal heart is led
> Unto the thinking of the thought divine.

But faith has no light of its own. Faith is a moving force, not a light. Faith is precisely that which needs illumination to bring it to its goal. We must be satisfied, therefore, with our 'torch of smoky pine' and patiently, faithfully pick our way 'unto the thinking of the thought divine.' " [1]

The faith that is the substance of things hoped for is thus far more truly religious than the faith that is the evidence of things unseen; for the former sends us forth to find the truth and to achieve our ideals, while the latter tends to confirm us in the indolent thought that these ends have already been found. It is the faith that impels to ceaseless search that has inspired the true prophet throughout the centuries, never the comfortable belief in some accepted creed. It is this faith that has led the high-minded in every generation to break step with the crowd, and to blaze new paths for the advance of mankind. And today, as yesterday, it is this faith that overcometh the world.

[1] H. W. Schneider, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

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